

Abstract - Carolyn Hardaker, De Montfort University

Title: CAD Expertise: A Key Employability Factor for Intimate Apparel Design Graduates

High graduate employability rates demonstrate that graduates from De Montfort University's BA(Hons) Contour Fashion programme are well equipped to succeed within the Intimate Apparel industry following an intense 3 years of study which emphasizes the importance of CAD skills throughout.

A recent survey of Contour Fashion alumni, graduating between 2007-2011, showed the graduates had secured a wide range of design roles, from trend forecasting to pattern development in companies across the globe. The survey investigated the importance of the CAD aspect of their course, with the results confirming that CAD expertise was an essential requirement requested by employers, which in some cases was tested at interview. All graduates were positive about the CAD content of the course and reported that their CAD expertise had been essential to them gaining employment.

Moving forward it is imperative to maintain and where possible develop this positive situation. The fast pace of software development means that the CAD curriculum is never static, so maintaining a good dialogue with alumni is an important means of verifying the curriculum. Providing flexibility of learning has also been an important drive over the last session (2011-12). A HEA funded project has enabled the CAD team to develop a library of screencasts to demonstrate CAD techniques, providing students with further support for their learning outside of class time. These are hosted on a VLE and accessible to students across all 3 years of the course to use in their self directed study.



Abstract - Francisco Sousa Lobo, Goldsmiths University of London

Title: Critiquing The Crit

The paper will examine the experience of different recent modes of teaching that try to bypass the crit format. It will feed on interviews with course leaders in the Art Department at Goldsmiths, and on the teaching experience of the speaker. The crit format constitutes a type of teaching that is still prevalent in art education. The types of experience that the crit provides will be analysed and dissected, as well as alternative methods of teaching that stand in contrast with the crit (the seminar, the group workshop, the following of process rather than final presentation in front of an exterior art critic). The conflation of fruition and discourse, that seems to be the main attribute of the crit, stands in direct contrast both to pedagogical concerns and to the realities of the art world. By the conflation of fruition and critique, the crit both mimics and stands in contrast to the art world, where these experiences are separate. By the common silence of the artist / student, the crit also tries to transpose the experience of the written review into an ambiguous, abrasive domain. This artificiality will also be the focus of the interviews. The paper will seek to analyse the crit as it is perceived both by course leaders and students, and try to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the format. New formats that stand in contrast or that substitute the crit will also be analysed and debated.

Abstract – Jill Journeaux, Coventry University

Title: Working for Success

Based on the work of the Creative Futures unit at Coventry School of Art & Design this presentation offers a case study of a successfully embedded approach to employability within Art & Design HE. In 2007 Coventry University placed responsibility for student and graduate employment, entrepreneurship and employability at a course and departmental level. Coventry School of Art & Design responded by establishing a specialist team of staff working to support the student and graduate agenda.

The Creative Futures team supports course teams in evolving discipline specific strategies and designing and delivering tailored activities and information for students and graduates.

Established in 2008, the Creative Futures team faced a range of economic and cultural challenges, in particular academic staff perceptions of, and attitudes towards, responsibility for the employability of graduates, and the nature of employment in the creative sector. This sat alongside a culture of entitlement by students, who needed to be better enabled to become pro-active and informed about strategies for achieving employment within their chosen disciplines, and the creative industries in general.

There was an urgent need to clarify the 'why, what and how's' of the employability agenda and the benefits of working to external metrics. The intention was to move away from a golden thread model to a fully embedded one, and achieve a pro-active and purposeful partnership between course teams and their students and graduates.

In the time that Creative Futures has been operating overall DHLE scores for Coventry School of Art & Design have increased by 25%, and the work undertaken in the School contributed to Coventry University winning the THES Entrepreneurial University of the Year award in 2012.

Abstract – Julie Haslam, Manchester Metropolitan University

Title: Continuous Support for Art & Design Student Transition into Higher Education

Research into the transition experiences of Art & Design students entering Higher Education has been undertaken at MMU since 2009. Initial findings highlighted the predominant role that emotions and social interactions play within Art & Design pedagogy and that students were unprepared for both the emotional impact and the level of independent and autonomous learning expected of them.

Based on these findings a pre-entry online portal was designed to support students during the key period of transition. Since 2009, this portal has been utilized by a number of Art & Design programmes. Annual evaluations of the student experience have enabled iterative development of the portal and associated online support. The portal is now primarily delivered via the institutional Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) enabling students to become familiar with it before arriving at university and enabling a quick start to using it in their studies. Using the VLE also allows pre-entry information to be available all year, allowing a long and thin approach to induction that avoids information overload. A further enhancement has been the aligned use of the social networking tool Facebook to foster and build a learning community.

This case study focuses in detail on evaluation of 2012 provision for new level 4 students undertaking the BA (Hons) Textile in Practice programme. The study explores the effectiveness of the portal in supporting the development of a learning community and student autonomy skills. Furthermore, it examines the role of the portal in buffering the highly emotional process of student transition.

Abstract - Louise O'Boyle, University of Ulster

Title: Colouring Between the Lines: the Impact of Flexible Learning Spaces on First Year Art and Design Students' Attitudes to their Learning Experience in HE

Current approaches to learning within art and design tertiary education have evolved as a result of a changing sector, economy and diverse student population. Traditional learning and teaching methods have been increasingly complemented with flexible learning spaces that enhance the learners experience both inside and outside the classroom. The opportunity they provide allows self-directed exploration by the student and aims to be both motivational and informative. But what do the students think? Does the use of flexible learning spaces promote confidence and ultimately competence?

It is crucial that our students are not only introduced to art and design practices in a meaningful way, but that they have a positive and engaging experience within the tertiary learning environment. It is imperative that the transition from prior learning experiences to tertiary study is recognised by staff as instrumental in ensuring students' future success and retention on programmes of study. The National Student Survey of Undergraduate Students has highlighted for many institutions, staff, enrolled and prospective students, the experiences that strongly impact upon student attitudes.

This paper will discuss the impact of flexible learning spaces on student attitudes to their learning experience, their levels of confidence and competence. How much has this change, if any, been facilitated by embedding technologies into the curriculum design to enhance learning? As educators what do we need to hear that will inform our future approaches to and implementation of flexible learning strategies?

Abstract - Richard Sober, Teesside University

Title - Getting Engaged: Embedding Student led employability skills into the creative curriculum

Design courses can often be perceived as 'vocational' but employers are keen to stress the need to develop entrepreneurial and business skills. This paper will highlight a spatial design module that encourages students to apply their creativity towards enhancing learner employability through student led team projects where they conceive, plan and organise careers related events for the benefit of their peers.

Initially students pitch their ideas to demonstrate feasibility and seek approval to develop them. This year teams organised a wide range of exciting events including a creative industry careers conference, running a competition for one of their cohort to win a work experience placement with a major architects practice, completing a community project in a local school and arranging a visit to inspirational architecture with the buildings' designer followed by a networking lunch with his colleagues.

The module provides an opportunity to gain both personal development and business skills including teamwork, marketing, project management, communication and leadership experience in an effort to replicate authentic professional practice. Students are challenged to develop new skills with the goal of gaining precious added value to their CVs.

Towards the end of the module the students reflect upon the process and also create a record of what they did so that a resource can be built up of the events for wider dissemination. Samples of these will be shown to help illustrate the project and it is hoped that students will contribute to the presentation to incorporate their perspectives directly.

Abstract – Richenda Gwilt, University for the Creative Arts

Title: Mapping the Way: librarians and study advisors at UCA supporting employability

Librarians & Study Advisors at UCA recently devised a way to articulate how their work with students enhances students' employability and develops cognitive & research skills.

They developed a 'road map' of skills and qualities which students should develop in order to be a successful student (Academic Literacy), and which their work supports. They also developed an accompanying template, or 'route planner', to use when planning sessions with students.

This template encourages best pedagogic practice by aligning sessions with learning outcomes of unit briefs. 'If information literacy is not seen by learners as meaningful to them, they will not be motivated and are unlikely to make the effort to develop necessary concepts and skills'. (Shenton and Jackson, 2007)

After a successful pilot year, this road map – called the Academic Literacy & Development Framework (ALF) - is now reaching the end of its first full year in use.

This session will introduce ALF and the ideas behind it in more detail and will discuss how we believe student learning is enhanced by linking library & study advice sessions with employability and other academic literacy skills.



Abstract - Ross Anderson, University of the Arts London

Title: How University of the Arts London is positively influencing pre-degree art and design education

This presentation will focus on initiatives by the University of the Arts London (UAL) to position itself to positively influence pre-degree art and design education in the UK.

UAL formed UAL Awarding Body in response to developments in education policy and proposed changes to pre-degree art and design education. This Ofqual approved awarding body was established to develop and award art and design qualifications in the further education and schools sectors. UAL Awarding Body is the only specialist art, design and creative industries awarding body in the UK.

UAL Awarding Body works collaboratively with schools, colleges and higher education institutions, together with employers and other bodies such as Sectors Skills Councils, to ensure that its qualifications are fit-for-purpose and meet the needs of students.

This presentation will outline the UAL Awarding body position, current and future developments and present case studies and feedback from schools and colleges.

These include:

- An extensive research project exploring the effectiveness of current A-level in Art & Design provision
- Work led by Arts Council England to explore responses to the EBacc proposals and possible alternatives for art & design
- The design and delivery of Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications in drawing in schools and colleges
- The design and delivery of Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications in art & design in 6th Form Colleges and FE institutions.

Abstract – Victoria Kinsella, Birmingham City University

Title: Survival of the fittest: Art and Design teacher's survival amidst the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc).

This paper documents aspects of the findings from an ongoing qualitative PhD study involving four KS3 (11-14) Art and Design departments based in the West Midlands, England. Through interviews, questionnaires and observations problems associated to the status of Art and Design education amidst the Ebacc were identified.

The recent Ipsos MORI report 'The effects of the English Baccalaureate' (2012), documents worrying statistics that 27% of schools have cut courses as a result of the introduction of the Ebacc. The arts being the worst affected. Alongside this, other suggested policy initiatives such as the creation of new qualifications for Ebacc subjects and the plan for an ABacc see the arts being 'neglected', 'marginalized', 'diminished' and 'obliterated' (Adams, 2011:157).

Although a large number of organisations are getting involved in this debate, it is the teacher who faces the challenges of promoting the importance of the arts in school. This paper explores the position of teachers within school settings and their battle against the performative focus on knowledge creation, which ignores the value of the arts. And how they foster creative teaching and learning approaches within their classrooms, encouraging a culturally diverse education. The paper questions whether the teachers develop strategies to survive the policy system by rebelling, or get swallowed up by the system becoming conformists.

The findings conclude that in order to resist policy measures, teachers must begin to recapture aspects of their personalised pedagogies, where they move from a position of compliance to rebelling.