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The role of higher education in driving the UK's creative economy

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Steering Group



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The UK context

- UK a global leader in creative industries
- Over 7% UK GDP
 - cf. creative industries 2.6% EU GDP
- Creative skills and outputs across economy
 - 800,000 in creative occupations other sectors
 - 55% creative products bought by other sectors
- But global competition fierce and growing
- UK economy 21st century?
 - not cheap labour or cheap natural resources
 - but knowledge, imagination, ideas
 - that is essential role of higher education
 - and creative industries key part of that future



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Why the *Creating Prosperity* Report?

- Universities UK: organisation of all universities
- Role of HE in creative econ little recognised government
 - little in *Creative Britain* (2008), *Digital Britain* (2009)
 - and absent from wider government rhetoric
- Universities UK decided to launch major report
 - EKOS Consultants
 - partner organisations on Steering Group I chaired
 - literature review, case studies, regional focus groups, stakeholder interviews
 - launched in challenging fiscal climate for HE and arts



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Project's dual focus

1. Research and innovation

breadth and impact on creative sector
of work within and across disciplines
often collaborating with creative businesses

2. Graduate skills

creative talent needs educating, enhancing
higher education crucial to that
67% in creative industries are graduates (cf 31% UK)
80%+ some sectors eg animation, interactive media
creative enterprises often small, micro, networked
education for employability and entrepreneurship
maintaining skills: continuing professional development

Conclusion?

5 key areas of impact

Higher education's impact in 5 key areas:

1. driving innovation through new ideas & practice
2. supporting regional hubs for innovation
3. a primary source of talent for the creative economy
4. support for employability and enterprise
5. providing continuing professional development (CPD) for the creative industries

Will now summarise main points on each of these

1. Driving innovation through new ideas & practices

- In other words *research* in higher education institutions including practice-based research
- Often working closely with small & large businesses and third-sector cultural & creative organisations
- Working across disciplines crucial
mistaken to divide disciplines, emphasise technology
technology provides potential – content gives it value
disciplines in Report? Yes, creative & performing arts
+ nanotechnology, computing, literature, maths, psych
- Case study: *Horizon Digital Economy Hub (Nottingham)*
researchers in arts, science, technology, business
value from footprints left by mobile & digital technologies

2. Supporting regional hubs for innovation

- Regional hubs and clusters critical to creative economy
- Universities & academics often key intermediaries & players
- Integrated programmes of research & knowledge exchange staff, students, businesses
- Case study: *University of Abertay Dundee*
multi-disciplinary hub for games industry
educates students for innovation in games & digital media
- Across UK multi-disciplinary work for computer games
creative & performing arts, computing, humanities, psych
working regionally in networks of games developers

3. Primary source of talent for creative economy

- Nearly 400,000 students in over 5000 courses related to creative economy (16% students)
- Not all for careers in creative industries
creative skills into business, public & third sector
- Education for talent, theory, challenge, business
- Industry often engaged in course design and delivery
- Case study: *Skillset Media & Screen Academies*
22 university-based Academies
bring together industry and academic partners
to deliver world-class industry-relevant education
undergraduate and postgraduate level

4. Focus on employability & enterprise

- Importance of these for successful creative career
- Micro & small enterprise, networked business models
distinctive mode of getting a living common creative econ
- Challenge of entrepreneurship
- Case study: *Fuel RCA at Royal College of Art*
helps current students and recent graduates
activities for young artists & designers
developing presentations, IP understanding, debates on
major themes like ‘ambition’ and ‘values’
- Case study: *Glasgow School of Art*
work-based learning for students across all disciplines
placements, live projects, case studies, mentoring etc



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5. Providing CPD for creative industries

- CPD crucial in rapidly-changing industries
universities often source of latest ideas
out of interaction with creative projects & businesses
transferred through teaching & amphibious practitioners
- Case study: *University for the Creative Arts*
raft of CPD across creative economy
supporting creative practitioners & businesses across SE
- Case study: *Bournemouth University*
Masters-level CPD courses for media professionals
industry partners incl. BBC and Guardian
credit-bearing provision for both
- CPD identified as way to connect enterprises to HEIs



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What issues emerge?

- Continued investment needed for high-quality provision
creative economy disciplines not cheap
- Better understanding of knowledge transfer for these
industries needed
- Need to build better understanding language of skills
expectations industry & academia often differ
- Real progress around employability
but articulation business demand still a barrier
- Similar issues CPD
creative businesses small, lack resources to engage
- Early days entrepreneurship education
need to understand quality & models: variable provision₁₁



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Recommendations

- More than analysis – 20 key recommendations to government, HEIs, creative businesses,
- Government must recognise role of HE in creative inds and shift focus from science/engineering as sole priorities see importance of subjects that underpin creative econ and support distinctive modes of knowledge transfer
- HEIs must address barriers to cross-disciplinary working need for cultural & practical incentives to work with CIs develop flexible IP systems to encourage user interaction with creative business develop entrepreneurship educ
- Creative businesses work with higher education articulate skills needs, broker engagement & clusters support work-based learning esp internships



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Some final reflections?

- Creative economy is a non-linear world
in how skills used, how innovation happens, how policy leads to outcomes; can't just transfer existing models
- Thriving cultural sector vital to creative economy
but cannot assume former will produce latter
- Creative economy will only flourish where imagination does
society that values arts as well as business, science
educational culture that values imagination, challenge
- Creative ideas and graduates will engage across economy
produce value way beyond creative economy itself
- Urban setting critical: space, networks, clusters, energy
and cannot produce artificially, top-down



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And a very final reflection....

Hong Kong's economic pillars include education & creative inds

Creating Prosperity report shows they tie closely together

at all levels of education – up to universities

through skills, education, research, knowledge creation

yet often hard to get synergies to work

at times seem to work in spite of obstacles

creative economy makes us think afresh about much of this

many of the lessons inform wider economy

don't imagine that policy for creative econ affects only that

but creative econ won't thrive in unhelpful policy environment

or, as in UK, it could flourish and then weaken



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You want to find the report?

Creating Prosperity: the role of higher education in driving the UK's creative economy (2010)

<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Documents/CreatingProsperityTheRoleOfHigherEducation20101130.pdf>