

Segment One

Sector: Creative

Executive summary:

The key characteristics of the skills system for Creative Sector include.

- Need for more Leadership and management training as part of the Creative Sector training at all levels and disciplines across the sector.
- Better defined progress routes for a number of sector roles.
- Highly regarded courses from peers and expert practitioners are sought after.
- Business Support skills to support sole trader, freelance and Micro employers

Ensure - Creative art and design education equips young people with the fundamental technical skills they need to work in the creative and cultural sector. Vocational education and training, along with higher education, must keep pace with developments within the sector and support learners to develop the business, as well as the creative, skills needed to succeed in work or self-employment. In addition to the work of the National Skills Academy for Creative and Cultural, **closer links between education providers (schools, colleges, training providers, HE institutions), arts organisations and employers more broadly could help to address deficiencies in current provision and ensure education and training meets the needs of employers, both in new and emerging industries and the 'master crafts'.**

Inspire - It is important to continue to work to raise awareness of the range of careers in the creative and cultural sector and the benefits of studying creative subjects through effective information, advice and guidance for young people and meaningful work experience, including paid internships.

The evidence suggests that employees are motivated to train and develop. It is, therefore, important to **invest continuous professional development and develop creative ways to overcome time and resource constraints in order to enable staff to engage.** In addition to ensuring workforce skills remain up to date and staff are able to adapt to change.

The majority of interviewees focused on gaps relating to business support skills such as financial management and strategic planning. This included sole traders who perceived that they **lacked the necessary skills to grow their business**, and employers who felt that their staff had some skills in this area but did not have a broad range of business skills.

Fundraising was felt to be a notable gap for those with an artistic background, as they were unlikely to have had access to training or guidance in this area and might be unaware of who to approach for this. However, **fundraising is just part of the bigger issue of financial planning.**

Vocational skills related to creative business support occupations "[Practitioners] need skills support in terms of business development, in all aspects of business development. Finance, marketing, social media.

When asked about leadership in their organisation and the sector more generally, the majority of interviewees suggested that **leadership skills represented a significant skills gap in the sector both currently and going forward**. Interviewees did not think that there were any specific leadership qualities that leaders in the sector lacked, but felt that they often lacked the **breadth of skills** required for these positions, particularly in small organisations where many different demands were placed on the role of a leader.

Creative and cultural sector did not value business skills in the same way as it prioritised creative skills. Secondly, this type of skills gap was caused by a lack of attention given to this in vocational training. **Courses were believed to focus on the creative aspect rather than how to survive as a sole trader or contribute to the running of a business.**

Some employers also felt that skills gaps existed in their organisation because they lacked the capacity to release staff to attend relevant training courses. Small organisations with frontline staff in particular struggled to cover training time, so upskilling current staff to fill identified gaps was difficult.

Interviewees **attributed current skills shortages to changes in the education system**. Some suggested that a lack of educational opportunities to develop creative skills at secondary or tertiary level had led directly to a skills shortage. Others alluded to a more complex set of factors which included **a lack of effective careers education, information, advice and guidance in schools resulting in a lack of awareness of the wider opportunities within the creative and cultural sector**. Furthermore, the current curriculum was criticised for a lack of alignment with the skills needs of the sector and for focusing only on the skills required for a narrow range of careers, such as performance roles, rather than the **wider skills and knowledge required for the business side of the industry**. Ensuring young people were aware of the wider business roles available in the creative and cultural sector and have the opportunity to develop these skills, as well as their creative and technical skills, was essential if future skills shortages were to be avoided.

Larger employers were in a stronger position to access training and to release staff for training purposes than smaller organisations. **Sole traders and leaders of micro businesses did this where possible, but would like to have the funding or the capacity to be able to do more**. Three-quarters of sole traders were seeking to overcome their skills gaps through the development of partnerships or collaborative working.
(Building a Creative Nation: Current and future skills needs CCSkills. 2018)

Main challenges for supply and demand:

Supply – Traditional training Providers (including FE and HE) find it difficult to engage with the sector in a coherent way, this is particularly applicable to the continuing professional development of current employees within the sectors. In addition the sector has trusting peer relationships and sector stakeholder organisations and experts over traditional providers.

Demand – The sector has a variety of training demands for that can differ vastly from organisation to organisation. This can be difficult to articulate to providers. In addition there are a number of very specialist courses that are difficult to source.

Skills Service data indicates there are trends for certain types of training from across the Leeds City Region (LCR) Local Enterprise Region (LEP), these could be tackled first.

Current Capacity and Capability of the provider network in the Leeds City Region.

The current capacity for the provider network is good, the key requirements for the providers aggregate cumulative demand to ensure courses can be cost effective, part funding can support this but technology solutions must also be embraced.

Capability of the provider network is more complicated. The network needs to more effectively understand how to engage with businesses in the sector, how to access them how to support them. The network must also be encouraged to engage in non-traditional ways, the network must understand the flexibilities of delivery that are required by these sectors employers.

Example - Large Employers pay more for delivery and also commission more skills and training, then micros and SMEs infill with additional funding to support their involvement.

Key findings/conclusions:

Poor initial education and training in creative subjects along with inadequate careers education and guidance are regarded as contributing to long-standing skills shortages in the creative industries.¹⁸ **Sector bodies, such as Creative & Cultural Skills, have sought to address these issues and reduce the number of unfilled vacancies by supporting employers to adapt their recruitment practices and attract a more diverse range of skilled individuals.**

Currently, the sector is dominated by white men qualified to at least degree level. Networking and unpaid internships prevail as routes into the sector and this narrows opportunities for many non-graduates and those from lower socioeconomic groups in particular.

Effective leadership and management is key to the sustainability and growth of any business and the creative and cultural sector as a whole. Carty and Jennings highlighted that those in leadership roles need a range of skills in addition to business management including: leading people, strategic planning, vision setting, lobbying, advocacy and influencing, effecting organisational change, and developing partnership and stakeholder relationships. These skills are particularly important in the context of the UK Government's austerity policy that has resulted in budget cuts for key funders of the creative and cultural sector, including local authorities and Arts Council England.

The BOP report also identified the need for more distributed models of leadership which give individuals at all levels of an organisation the autonomy to take decisions and contribute to the effective operation of the business. In addition, business **leaders will need to develop the skills to manage the digital change process.**

(Building a Creative Nation: Current and future skills needs CCSkills. 2018)

- Increase the Diversity of Workforce,

The majority of business leaders would like to see the diversity of the workforce. Increasing diversity through raising awareness of opportunities in the sector is critical in order to drive the change in attitudes and cultures that is needed in order to avoid skills shortages in the future. Employers feel that schools, as well as colleges and universities also have a role. Much more could be done to make young people aware of the diverse range of careers

available in the creative and cultural sector, and in the business-orientated vocations that may appeal to a more diverse range of young people in particular.

Raising awareness of other careers in the creative and cultural sector would help to boost a young person's employment prospects while also addressing future skills needs.

Educating future generations and encouraging people from diverse backgrounds to aspire to a career in the creative and cultural sector will help to ensure a pipeline of talent with the appropriate skills. However, a decrease in the number of schools and colleges offering creative art and design courses, the decrease in the number of students studying these subjects and a lack of effective information, advice and guidance on careers in the creative and cultural sector are perceived to be threatening the development of the talent pipeline

- Aggregate demand from a variety of sub-sectors, so courses that are scheduled are delivered

A major issue – particularly for small employers – was simply not being able to afford to take on staff to fill the skills gaps that they had identified. For sole traders and small employers, filling skills gaps by hiring specialist staff or upskilling their current workforce was not financially viable.

- Additional Flexible Delivery methods, e.g. online delivery

Some employers also felt that skills gaps existed in their organisation because they lacked the capacity to release staff to attend relevant training courses. Small organisations with frontline staff in particular struggled to cover training time, so upskilling current staff to fill identified gaps was difficult.

- Improve Career pathways and CPD

Training, including apprenticeship, is perceived to be key to addressing skills gaps. Apprenticeships were regarded by some employers, particularly those that employ apprentices, as important for addressing skills shortages as well as tackling skills gaps among existing staff and increasing the diversity of the workforce. However, more needs to be done to develop the infrastructure.

Higher-level computing skills will become increasingly important in the future. Digital / technological skills will be particularly important, reflecting the perceived future direction of the sector and the rapidly changing digital landscape that is shaping it. ICT skills encompass production skills as well as marketing and promotion.

Find out more about the Creative Collaborative Skills Partnership and get in touch through - <https://www.westyorkshirecolleges.co.uk/contracted-projects/lets-talk-real-skills/creative>