

Enterprise and Learning Committee

EL(3) 17-08 (p18) : 12 June 2008

Creative & Cultural Skills' submission to the National Assembly for Wales' Enterprise and Learning Committee's inquiry into the economic contribution of higher education.

Introduction

Creative & Cultural Skills is the Sector Skills Council for the advertising, crafts, cultural heritage, design, literature, music, performing arts and visual arts industries.

Previously an Industry Training Body: No

Statutory/Voluntary Industry Levy: No

Date of SSC Licence: June 2005

Date Sector Skills Agreement Action Plan signed off: 18 March 2008.

Expected date of Sector Qualification Strategy sign off: summer 2008

Industry Context

In Wales the workforce across **advertising, crafts, cultural heritage, design, literature, music, performing arts and visual arts industries** is 19,000 contributing £454M GVA to the UK economy. The largest industries are the Arts and Design.

To 2014 a growth of 10,000 jobs are expected in Wales with 50% in expansion and 33% as higher skilled jobs in industries where currently 46% of the workforce hold Level 4 or above qualifications.

In terms of scale, important industry features are the high numbers of micro businesses, and people who are self employed (39%) or freelance (22%) with a small number of large businesses and organisations.

Key future skills needs are Leadership, Management, Information and Digital Technology, Business and Professional Skills, Negotiation, Marketing and PR. These are underpinned by the role of creativity and communication and having a client or customer focused business/organisation.

Provided below is the evidence and examples relating to the Committee's questions that Creative & Cultural Skills feels it can respond.

Committee's questions:

the effect that the skills agenda is having on HEIs impact on the labour market and whether they are meeting the needs of businesses

As a result of the research and consultation in Creative & Cultural Skills' Sector Skills Agreement, five challenges have been identified:

1. There are significant gaps in work based technical and specialist skills provision.
2. Increasing and further developing higher skills in the workforce is essential for continued and future industry success, with a need for a greater focus on business and enterprise.
3. The high volume of education and training provision presents an unclear picture to individuals and employers in terms of qualifications valued by employers for entry into industry, career development and progression.
4. The need to diversify the workforce for business success.
5. The challenge of increasing employer investment and commitment to training and development in industries dominated by micro businesses and self employed/freelancers.

Wales has 3% of the UK Further and Higher Education provision of 180,000 courses, and there are over 66,000 students on a creative or cultural related course in Wales. This is over three times more than the number of people working in the sector. Volume and oversupply in relation to the job market are issues, particularly around the information, advice and guidance students have regarding employment in the industries. There is also a lack of clarity for employers and students about which courses have value for employment or recruitment.

Restricting access to creative and cultural courses is not advocated, as this would not take into account the many reasons individuals begin a creative or cultural course. The key issue is course content and employers and practitioners' roles in developing content, plus the transferability of skills developed on courses. In contrast, there are some specialist areas of industry where course provision is at risk

because of small numbers of students, and these need to be supported.

Only 36% of employers and practitioners in Wales have funded or arranged training. On average, employers and practitioners spend 15 days training per year. Employers and practitioners tend to use external training in order to fill skills gaps and where they do make use of informal or internal training this seems to be because of a lack of access to external training. A key impact on the type of training undertaken is the size of the business. In general, larger businesses tend to employ a greater selection of training methods.

the drive towards collaboration between HEIs and its impact on their local and regional economies

Creative & Cultural would support the drive towards collaboration although this level of research has not been undertaken as part of its Sector Skills Agreement. What is important for the creative and cultural industries is that individuals and businesses have access to high quality provision and access to specialist provision.

Creative & Cultural Skills is working in partnership with the Arts Council of Wales, Welsh Assembly Government and the Creative & Cultural Skills Wales Employers Group on a bid for Convergence funding under the strategic theme Skills for the Knowledge Economy: Higher Level Skills and Workforce Development (P3T2). Programmes that will be supported by Convergence funding are CPD, Creative & Cultural Leadership Programme, a Centre for Excellence linked to Wales Millennium Centre and the UK Design Skills Alliance.

Collaboration and partnerships with HEIs, particularly in terms of CPD and the UK Design Skills Alliance are important to ensure sustainable and successful programmes.

The UK Design Skills Alliance is one example of an industry need for changes in education and training to meet a fast changing business world and that industry does not undertake enough continuous professional development. The Design Blueprint (2008) is the industry workforce plan to address these issues, including a Multi-disciplinary network, developing multi-disciplinary programmes at Higher Education level that match the types of project team and multi-disciplinary working that are increasingly the norm in the industry. A network of Colleges and Universities will be developed to support programme and skills development for multi-disciplinary Design education.

In terms of a CPD programme across the creative and cultural industries, Creative & Cultural Skills will build on the success of the Equity and Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama CPD programme. This flexible and bespoke training programme has been a great success and has is now in its second year and will run for a further two years.

It is vital that the creative and cultural industries has access to sustainable, flexible provision with delivery methods that suit the industries, quality industry engagement and better communication between industry and HE.

Committee's questions:

the success of HEIs in accessing funding from a range of sources which impacts on the local and regional economies;

the wider contributions of universities to their localities, including community work, cultural contributions and student and graduate mobility and markets;

As noted above, a partnership between Equity and Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama has resulted in a successful CPD programme. This programme has been funded by Third Mission funding and Creative & Cultural Skills hopes that more such partnerships will benefit the sector. The creative and cultural industries need consistent specialist education.

Committee's questions:

to make recommendations arising from our findings.

Creative & Cultural Skills believes that better communication and flexibility between industry and HE will increase the economic contribution of the HE sector in the Welsh economy and help raise its productivity through the high level skills of its workforce.

Greater interaction is needed to ensure specialist training is relevant and graduates are employable. Consistent investment for specialist education focusing on quality will have a greater impact in the economic development. Sector Skills Councils are strategically positioned to facilitate this industry engagement.

Creative & Cultural Skills looks to the outcome of the HEFCW funded feasibility study on workforce development and wishes to emphasise the need for HEIs to formally engage SSCs in this process.