

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



WHAT ARE THE LONG-TERM BENEFITS OF INVESTING IN ART, CRAFT & DESIGN IN EDUCATION FOR LEARNING, CULTURE, WELLBEING AND SOCIETY? PRELIMINARY REPORT

THE ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP FOR ART, DESIGN AND CRAFT IN EDUCATION.

COMPILED BY PROF. SAMANTHA BROADHEAD (LEEDS ARTS UNIVERSITY) JANUARY 2022.

THIS REPORT IDENTIFIES THE BENEFITS OF INVESTING LONG TERM IN ART, CRAFT AND DESIGN EDUCATION. IT IS BASED UPON TWO EVIDENCE SESSIONS COMPRISING OF EXPERT PANELS FROM RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES.

OUR INQUIRY

We began our inquiry on 17 November 2020 with two preliminary evidence sessions, chaired by Sharon Hodgson MP and Nicholas Trench, The Earl of Clancarty. Nineteen reports and case studies were also gathered for the report. We are grateful to everyone who submitted their evidence to our inquiry. These two sessions were the first in a series of events and contributed lines of inquiry that were pursued later, for example initial teacher education.

We began our inquiry during the Covid-19 pandemic and so we felt it was important to acknowledge the impact of lockdowns on creative education in schools, in further end higher education. We were also concerned about the impact of the pandemic on the creative sector, and how the pipeline of talent into those industries was in danger of becoming more fragmented and homogenised.

Our specific enquiry focuses on *the benefits a creative education can have for learning, culture, wellbeing and society, while recognising the barriers that threaten access for some pupils and students to studying the arts.*

METHOD

Experts from research, community arts, arts education, the creative industries and learned organisations were invited to share their insights, experience in a series of evidence sessions. They were also asked to share concrete examples from their research and practice in this area. A steering group proposed questions to be directed towards the panels of experts. A smaller working panel then compiled the evidence session reports.

Transcripts from the sessions were used to create a synopsis of the responses to each question. Key themes were then identified from the responses to each question. Cross-cutting themes then informed the report's conclusions.

Evidence sessions were held on Tuesday 17 November 2020, 5-6pm and 6-7 pm respectively. They featured two expert panels responding to questions that related to the title of this report from members of The APPG for Art, Craft and Design in Education (APPG).

HERE IS THE SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT:

ART, CRAFT AND DESIGN EDUCATION

1. Recognise that formal and informal learning about art, craft and design in schools, colleges, universities, museums and community settings, can have a significant impact on communities and the lives of individuals.
 2. Encourage schools to promote the approach of young people in studying science, technology and creative subjects together, rather than specialising too soon, so they are well-prepared for the creative, digital and technical jobs of the future. Digital and creative skills should be taught together in schools, FE and HE so that people will gain sustainable employment in the future.
 3. Create a National Council for Curriculum and Assessment would help ensure that schools provide a balanced curriculum. Strong support of professional associations for creative subjects, will help them to promote the value of arts and design subjects in the curriculum.
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CULTURE

4. Recognise through art curricula at all levels, that everyone needs to be culturally literate in the global community we inhabit, and that freedom of expression is related to the value we place on the arts.
 5. Ensure that schools continue to have a key role to play supporting, valuing, celebrating and making visible the diverse cultural capitals that exist in the UK – so that everyone feels included. This is an indicator of high-quality education.
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WELLBEING

6. Support and encourage socially engaged art education that creates spaces in both formal and informal contexts where individuals and communities feel safe and valued. People from diverse backgrounds and communities are able to come together, establish friendships, talk and listen to one another. This can be of particular benefit to people who experience feelings of isolation and loneliness.
 7. Long-term investment in formal and informal art education will mean that people can continue to feel well and have an improved quality of life through learning a craft skill, taking part in a practical art workshop or going to a museum.
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EDUCATIONAL PIPELINES INTO THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

8. Cultural recovery plans should support those freelancers that have been impacted by the pandemic including access to professional development. The creative industries are developing in micro-clusters across the UK, so recovery plans should focus on the whole of the UK not just on London and the South East.
9. Policy makers and educators need to understand the ways in which the cultural industries are organised (complex and fragmented) and how they operate (with various modes of employment: part-time, full-time, freelance).
10. Long-term investment into art and design educational research and development is needed, so that the pipelines of skill and talent – from school, to FE to HE and into industry – are more robust and responsive to future requirements.
11. Create a Centre for Artificial Intelligence that would exploit the synergy between technology and creativity facilitated by a nexus of arts and technical skills, enabling the UK to become a world leader in areas such as artificial intelligence.
12. Recognise and support Continuous Professional Development (CPD) so that generalist art teachers develop their knowledge, skills and awareness of both the subject and the wide range of creative contexts for making such as the contemporary crafts scene. CPD can also help teachers at all levels to highlight potential careers in craft and the creative industries to their students.