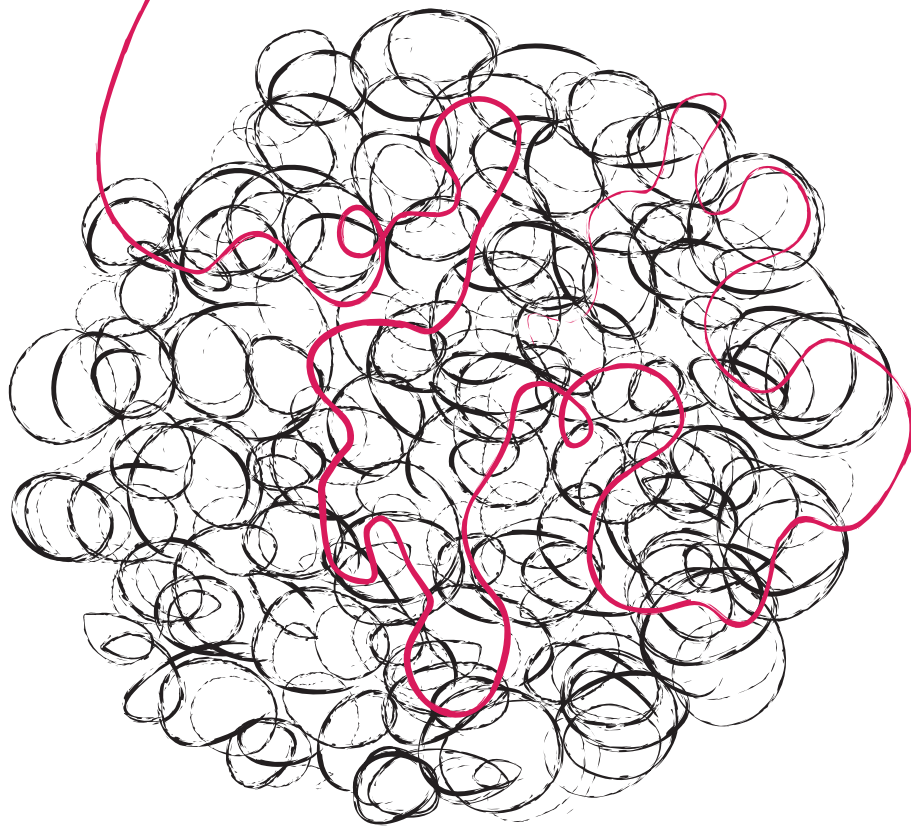


# **CREATIVE GRADUATES CREATIVE FUTURES**



teaching assistant + museum volunteer + event co-ordinator ▫ learning resource assistant ▫ costume maker ▫ magazine artworker + self-employed jewellery business ▫ creative manager/team leader ▫ creative enterprise specialist ▫ cinematographer + camera operator ▫ designer/deputy manager ▫ lecturer + artist + author ▫ interior designer ▫ magazine editor ▫ artist + tutor + administrator ▫ gallery owner + working artist: commissions and exhibitions ▫ supply teacher (secondary art) ▫ photographer ▫ animator ▫ teacher of art and design ▫ part-time personal assistant in 2 jobs ▫ own business jewellery design and making + tutoring arts and crafts + community education worker ▫ literary work + literary work + visual work ▫ wholesale manager ▫ programme executive/promo producer + producer ▫ teacher ▫ chairman + stylist ▫ painter + sessional tutor ba level ▫ senior support worker ▫ museums education officer + commission work ▫ art technician + artist ▫ interior designer ▫ fine artist ▫ design consultant ▫ designer + web designer ▫ art lecturer ▫ product developer (fashion) ▫ business start up ▫ retail designer ▫ video editor ▫ retail designer in 3 jobs ▫ conservator + freelance artist/illustrator ▫ art tutor + print designer in 2 other jobs ▫ youth volunteering advisor + teaching evening class + volunteering ▫ housing assistant ▫ production manager ▫ designer ▫ marketing manager ▫ designer ▫ costume designer ▫ sculptor + set designer/builder + military reserve ▫ arts admin + arts council projects + preparing for group show ▫ textile design + retail assistant ▫ assistant buyer ▫ art group chairman ▫ designer ▫ charity coordinator + freelance textile design ▫ account manager ▫ freelance textiles ▫ interior designer + floral designer ▫ studio photographer ▫ self-employed + volunteer ▫ teacher of textiles ▫ digital art teacher + adult education art teacher ▫ pr agency account director ▫ graphic designer ▫ human resources ▫ building maintenance ▫ exhibitions coordinator ▫ senior graphic designer ▫ teaching - head of art and design ▫ stock controller ▫ school technician + visual artist ▫ retail assistant + designer/artist ▫ freelance designer + sales assistant + textile intern ▫ civil servant ▫ photography in 2 jobs ▫ artist + gallery and retail assistant + museum volunteer ▫ product developer ▫ sales assistant + florist ▫ teacher ▫ freelance prop maker + theatre company director ▫ interior design + kitchen design ▫ designer ▫ theatre design + interior design ▫ salaried work + arts practice + freelance curator ▫ gallery associate director ▫ learning support assistant ▫ studio recording ▫ sales agent ▫ children's book illustrator and author + maths and english tutor for children + studio work ▫ ceramic artist ▫ account manager ▫ civil servant ▫ homewear buyer ▫ library development worker ▫ teaching ▫ freelance print textile designer + teaching myself it skills + jewellery designer ▫ teaching ▫ teaching printmaking ▫ personal practice + scenic art ▫ freelance outworker + studio/exhibition work ▫ company stage manager ▫ senior designer (fashion and accessories) + freelance/commissions + volunteering ▫ copywriter ▫ industry development /training coordinator ▫ senior designer ▫ administrator + project manager + volunteering ▫ art education/workshop ▫ cruise ship administrator/excursion assistant ▫ freelance copywriting artist ▫ nannying + pr + radio ▫ teacher ▫ sales manager ▫ designer ▫ teacher/tutor ▫ director of marketing and design company + marketing and business manager in renewables ▫ commission work + teaching + exhibition work ▫ create one-off pieces for me ▫ fashion designer ▫ director + web/graphic designer ▫ interior designer + illustrator ▫ creative manager ▫ supply teacher ▫ lecturer + freelance designer ▫ assistant buyer ▫ children's book illustrator and author ▫ senior designer ▫ potential exhibition preparation ▫ portraiture ▫ assistant photographer (2 jobs) + artist/photographer ▫ entrepreneurship coordinator + jewellery designer ▫ picture researcher ▫ picture framer + photographer + gallery exhibition ▫ artist ▫ animator ▫ website designer/art director ▫ self-employed + exhibition preparation ▫ architectural assistant ▫ full-time teacher + self-employed artist ▫ branding/sponsorship ▫ picture editor ▫ freelance film production manager ▫ community arts projects ▫ supported learning assistant/adult education ▫ design teacher ▫ own business ▫ photographer ▫ tv editor ▫ artworker + freelance designer ▫ broadcasting channel coordinator ▫ graphics teacher + stationery designer ▫ fashion editor + stylist ▫ senior designer ▫ interior designer (employed) + freelance ▫ teacher of visual arts ▫ occasional freelance + designer job + voluntary work for magazine ▫ glass workshop assistant + glassmaker/designer ▫ police constable ▫ software design + reading and writing ▫ auction house ▫ art support ▫ project management ▫ jeweller + jobbing jeweller ▫ photography teacher secondary school ▫ hypnotherapist ▫ design manager + freelance director ▫ administrator (fashion suppliers) ▫ 3d modeller ▫ freelance cameraman and photographer + camera assistant ▫ senior designer ▫ theatre designer + illustrator ▫ photographer + lecturer + fine artist ▫ graphic designer ▫ creative director ▫ garment construct + styling ▫ artwork commission ▫ working for agencies + teaching + making clothes/fine art ▫ artist + retail + freelance model maker ▫ costume designer/maker ▫ costume assistant ▫ graphic designer ▫ designer/director + teacher ▫ textiles teacher + actor ▫ buyer, new york + founder of 'stylizers' ▫ prop/costume maker ▫ interpretation manager + ma studies + occasional costume designer ▫ senior producer ▫ senior accessories designer ▫ bank clerk ▫ gallery manager + administrator ▫ graphics/repro + photographer ▫ studio practice + environmental initiative in 2 jobs ▫ freelance animation compositor/director + animation compositor + painter/printer/animator/illustrator ▫ make up artist ▫ design accessories ▫ promoter/centre manager + graphic artist + chair of trustees ▫ matte painter + concept artist ▫ clapper loader + film maker ▫ designer maker + gallery assistant ▫ womenswear ▫ receptionist + designer/assistant + designer ▫ photographer + artist ▫ temp + pr events volunteer + pr coordinator ▫ designer ▫ proposals writer ▫ fashion designer ▫ support worker/arts facilitator + shop assistant ▫ studio

creative graduates creative futures

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# **CREATIVE GRADUATES CREATIVE FUTURES**

A major longitudinal study undertaken between 2008 and 2010 of the career patterns of graduates in art, design, crafts and media subjects qualifying in 2002, 2003 and 2004 from 26 UK higher education institutions

**Linda Ball**

**Emma Pollard**

**Nick Stanley**

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Linda Ball, Emma Pollard and Nick Stanley

with contributions from: Ian Dumelow, Will Hunt and Joy Oakley

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**They can be downloaded from the project website: [www.creativegraduates.com](http://www.creativegraduates.com)**

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Edinburgh College of Art

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Nick Stanley

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The authors would like to thank the three and a half thousand graduates from across the UK and overseas who responded to the survey, and without whose help this project would not have been possible. Thanks are extended to all those who contributed in many different ways through the steering and management groups, and in particular to staff in the 26 partner higher education institutions who helped to construct a representative sample, contributed to the methodology and handled the mailing of the survey questionnaire to ensure we reached as many graduates as possible. The way in which the team at the Institute for Employment Studies has managed this ambitious research undertaking to its successful conclusion has been exemplary and we extend our gratitude to all staff involved. Finally, our thanks to Elizabeth Rouse and staff at the University of the Arts London for hosting the project, for continuing support and for taking the lead in initiating this study in 2007.

The authors have made use of data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), and acknowledge that HESA cannot accept responsibility for any inferences and conclusions that have been derived from these data.



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## Forewords

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### Will Hutton

#### Executive Vice-Chair, The Work Foundation

A lot of people have guessed at the structure of creative industry careers; none has had the evidence to support anything other than informed hunches. The issue is important. The industry is important economically, but more fluid and project based than most. Creativity itself is elusive to pin down, but the serendipities of interaction with other disciplines and cultures is plainly important. In *Staying Ahead*, the report to government that I and colleagues co-authored two years ago, we wondered to what extent creative careers helped the creativity process. Now we begin to have some answers.

These genuinely are individualistic knowledge workers who progress from one creative project to the next, and nearly half of them are portfolio workers – a source of creativity in its own right. 45 per cent were freelancers. All understand the need to continue learning; all valued what they had studied. What the report captures is the vigorous, if risky, world of creativity and those dedicated to work in it. They report great job satisfaction. However, they are desperately low paid. A third earn less than £15,000 a year – a very poor rate of return for years of study. Many found the only entry into the industry was via unpaid internships, requiring parental support and middle class backgrounds. The relationship is close to exploitative, even though the young men and women trying to win a foothold in the industry do not see it that way.

The creative industries should offer more paid internships, and take more care of its enthusiastic workforce. Governments should work harder at giving meaning to lifelong learning in the creative industries. But I suspect many creatives would stop there; they like what they do and how they do it – they just need a more supportive architecture. This report does not just paint a more detailed picture of the creative graduate world than we have had before – it suggests what an improved architecture might be.

## Professor Stuart Bartholomew

Principal, Arts University College at Bournemouth; Chair of UKADIA (United Kingdom Arts and Design Institutions Association)

### Current issues and landscape for art, design and media in higher education

In his foreword to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport publication *Creative Britain – New Talents for the New Economy*, Gordon Brown, the Prime Minister began with the short sentence, ‘Britain is a creative country’. This assertion is also shared by a broader public opinion that believes in the innate creative capital of Britain. Is creative capital innate or specifically generated? This report argues for the latter.

Ideas are the raw materials of creativity but unlike their physical counterparts they are neither mined nor harvested. Our creativity has been nurtured through a system of education in which the acquisition of ideas and the ability to apply them has had a selective place. The UK has nurtured individual creativity in its schools and colleges. Foremost, amongst these have been the institutions and faculties of art, design, media and performance.

Britain established such specialist art and design provision in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The initiative of the Great Exhibition of 1853 together with Prince Albert’s promotion of arts and manufactures, established metropolitan and regional colleges in which continuing education in broad arts and design was offered. Coupling pure and applied approaches, such institutions provided strong vocational progression to the burgeoning creative industries which by then were breaking free from the constraints of craft guilds.

International comparison illustrates the importance of an established structure of creative education to a creative culture. Britain leads OECD countries in its provision of higher and continuing education opportunity in arts and design with an associated high student participation rate. The contribution of our creative economy to overall gross domestic product (GDP) is also the highest. This congruence of a framework for creative education with a buoyant creative economy demonstrates nurture over nature.

The relationship of art and design education with the development of a creative economy is critical to understanding how we can continue to produce new talents for the ever-changing economy. The findings in *Creative Graduates Creative Futures* provide strong evidence of the contribution the art and design sector makes to early career patterns and employment in the UK creative industries. Evidence to this effect can also be found in earlier studies. The research conducted by Jane Ritchie (1970) on behalf of the Office of Population Census and Surveys provides insight to the employment profiles of those leaving art and design education at that time. The research found low levels of unemployment within six months of graduation (six per cent) and high levels of progression to related creative industries (77 per cent undergraduate/75 per cent postgraduate). This has been supported in the research conducted for *Destinations and Reflections* (1999) that further demonstrated the synergy between higher education in art and design and the growth of the creative industries.

The last decade has witnessed very significant growth in the creative sector. Current estimates suggest a £66 billion contribution to our GDP, representing eight per cent of the economy and the employment of two million people. Contrary to a persistent view of the creative culture as a subsidised periphery of economic life, the contribution of these industries to our creative output is not at the fringe of economic activity, but is increasingly at the heart of it. Moreover, in a setting of economic recession there is a recognition that the creative industries occupy a key role in economic recovery.

The landmark mapping exercise undertaken by Department of Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) in 1998 set out for the first time the extent and importance of UK creative industries and there has latterly been recognition of the relevance of art and design education to the acquisition of the high level skills for creative endeavour (DCMS, 2009). For Britain to sustain its position will demand greater focus and investment in nurturing skilled new talent, and a more active approach to business incubation and start-up in this rapidly developing field. To maintain and enhance the UK creative sector will require investment.

Such proposals find support in a wealth of research and government reports. Lord Leitch was commissioned by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 2004 to 'identify the UK's optimal skills mix in 2020 to maximise economic growth and productivity'. Leitch concluded that it would be possible for the UK to be a world leader on skills, but that this would present a formidable challenge. Not least amongst these challenges has been an antipathy to skills in UK higher education which frequently distinguishes skills from the acquisition of knowledge. Whilst this approach has never occupied a place in our art and design system where skills are seen as an intrinsic part of the process of literally making work, it does not obviate the necessity of supporting and investing in the skills base which forms a cornerstone of creative endeavour.

The *Cox Review of Creativity in Business* (2005) identified the importance of creativity, design and innovation to business performance and the UK economy. Cox points to the difficulties in exploiting our creative output and, in particular, supporting new enterprises. There is a clear need for focus on supporting business incubation in the creative sector. This will enhance the link between higher education and innovative creative practice, which, otherwise founders or is exported. *Creative Graduates Creative Futures* goes beyond traditional graduate surveys by offering reflections by graduates on their education experience, acquisition of skills and early career progression. There is abundant evidence here of a need for investment at early points in the career development of new talent in order for us to maximise our creative potential.

The last decade has witnessed significant growth in the size of higher education provision. This has been reflected in the 59 per cent growth of those students taking courses in arts and design subjects between 1999 and 2009 compared with 19 per cent for all first degree registrations. This is a source of pride but also concern. We are accessing a broader range of talent and engaging the participation of more students for whom there has been no family tradition of higher education. However, the infrastructure of art and design education upon which our creative success is based will not be sustainable in a situation where we progressively offer less to more. There must be more focussed

investment to ensure the currency of the curriculum, that our work has a global dimension, that it retains vitality and excitement to inspire students, nurture creativity and enhance professional development. To these ends, there are interesting comparisons with preference given to education provision in the sciences and the identification of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEMS) subjects. The work of the Department of Media Culture and Sport has done much to raise government and public awareness of the importance of our creative industries, but this has yet to achieve the priority it deserves from the Department of Business Innovation and Skills and the Higher Education Funding Council who support and manage English higher education provision. We also need stronger connections between the education system that nurtures talent and the industries which exploit and develop it.

To sustain a creative economy requires us to recognise the essential relationship between education and the industries to which graduates progress. It also requires a capacity to think new futures. There is a continuing tendency to drive into the future with eyes fixed on the rear view mirror and the past it reflects. The future isn't what it used to be and requires us to separate ourselves from the past as a key reference point. The world GDP forecasts predict that 65 per cent of global growth will be delivered by the emerging economies of Asia. Our place in such a competitive global future must privilege the assets of innovation and creativity which, in turn, require careful policy making, targeted investment and a supportive educational infrastructure. The discourse about Cultural Industries must move from the broad definitions attached to them by DCMS a decade ago. We are better served by the analysis offered by the National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts (2007) that identifies creative service providers; creative content producers; creative experience providers and creative original producers. To each category there is a supply chain and our institutions and faculties of art and design are crucial to their sustainability and future proofing of each one of them.

It is fair to speculate that if a 20th century student of art and design was asked, 'What do you make?' they would identify an artefact or product and in a particular mode of practice. We will be a creative nation in this new millennium when the answer to the same question is, 'We make a difference!' To which end, it is essential that we continue to nurture a national asset of creativity and innovation and support its exploitation. This will be a necessary part of planning for our future.

## Emma Hunt

Chair, Council for Higher Education in Art and Design (CHEAD); Dean, School of Art, Design and Architecture, University of Huddersfield

## Christoph Raatz

Executive Secretary, CHEAD

CHEAD has a strong reputation for its work in promoting UK art and design, and in activity which examines contemporary issues affecting the HE curriculum and its implementation. In this way, CHEAD has established itself as the leading voice of HE art and design and sets its mission and policy as a direct result of the wide interests of its membership. HE governance and policy is one driver and thus CHEAD positions itself to support, influence, direct and lobby for art and design HE. The CHEAD membership is as diverse as the sector it works in. The focus on relevance to each individual institutional mission is essential in the work that we do and, with this in mind, our strategy is to work with others in the creative sector and support other stakeholders in education. CHEAD commissions extensive research into key issues affecting the HE art and design sector, which informs the wider policy debate. Recent projects focused on widening participation, entrepreneurship and employability and institutions' strategic planning. It was therefore with great pleasure that we agreed to be a key partner in the *Creative Graduates Creative Futures* research project.

*Creative Graduates Creative Futures* is at the core of our current and future strategic plans. The results will provide much needed intelligence about the contribution our graduates make to the UK economy and wider society – the skills and abilities they bring to all situations. This will allow CHEAD to strengthen links with public bodies and industry in order further to improve student progression from universities to employment. It will offer CHEAD and its members important evidence for curriculum planning, employment support, industry engagement and the employment prospects for their students.

Possibly more importantly, following a time of relative stability, *Creative Graduates Creative Futures* will offer a platform from which to reflect on the changed economic circumstances we find ourselves in, to ensure our sector is able to implement and react to fast moving change. Flexibility, adaptability, collaboration and a willingness to look at different models of student experience in relation to employment preparation will be essential for CHEAD's strategic direction. Emerging career patterns will no doubt be tested to the extreme in the coming years, and will need to be seen in the context of responsiveness to other policy drivers for economic change and challenge, and their impact on the creative sector.

This, therefore, is a timely study as CHEAD sets out its priorities for the next few years, and will focus on a clear articulation to all stakeholders and a collective voice to government regarding the increasingly important value of a creative education. UK art and design higher education is uniquely positioned to bring together a range of opportunities to form new relationships for the development of creativity and innovation that supports a return to economic stability. We are very grateful to have been able to contribute to the project, as it could not have come at a more crucial moment.

## Elizabeth Rouse

Deputy Rector, University of the Arts London; Chair, Creative Graduates Creative Futures Steering Group

This report, *Creative Graduates Creative Futures* is the first published outcome of a national longitudinal survey undertaken in 2008-9 of the 26,000 creative graduates leaving universities and colleges in the period 2002-4. Ten years on from the publication of the pioneering *Destinations and Reflections*<sup>1</sup> this survey contributes to the longest continuous study of the working patterns and occupational choices of graduates in art, design, craft and media subjects.

We believe it provides an invaluable resource for all those interested in creative education and the workforce of the creative and cultural sectors, for policy makers and educators alike. The report contributes significantly to our understanding of the value and benefits of a creative education for the individual, and through their work and activities, for society. The findings on the working patterns of creative graduates, that they are characterised by a high level of self-employment, portfolio working, and work of a creative nature combined with evidence of life-long learning, will be of particular interest for policy makers concerned with the future development of the creative industries and the higher level skills debate. The detailed and highly differentiated data on the higher education experience, level of work satisfaction and motivations of graduates, will help educators improve the support for and preparation of their students for their future working lives.

This important research was commissioned and funded by a partnership of 26 UK higher education institutions supported by the University of the Arts and CHEAD. Many people across these institutions have contributed to the collection of data and the production of this report. In particular, I would like to thank the Institute for Employment Studies who devised the survey and analysed the results, our partners for their support in maximising the return, the steering group for their wise advice and the UAL project team Linda Ball and Jess Armistead for their expert management of the project overall. However, special thanks goes to Linda Ball, Emma Pollard and Nick Stanley who have in drafting this report drawn out some really fascinating and important findings from the data. I am confident that this report will be only the first to draw on the extraordinarily rich data that the survey has provided.

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<sup>1</sup> Blackwell A, Harvey L (1999), *Destinations and Reflections: Careers of British art craft and design graduates*, Centre for Research into Quality, University of Central England, Birmingham

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Appendix 3: Creative occupations

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Appendix 5: Survey questionnaire

Appendix 6: Tables

**The appendices for this study have been published separately.**

**They can be downloaded from the project website: [www.creativegraduates.com](http://www.creativegraduates.com)**

Note: references to appendices tables in the report are prefixed by 'Table App.'

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## Executive summary

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One of the most significant features of the last decade is the growth of the creative and cultural industries, as traditional industries have declined and micro-businesses have come to a new prominence in a sector characterised by a contract economy. Creative industries are unlike virtually any other sector, being heavily reliant on highly qualified graduate and post-graduate workers which are provided by HEIs in ever increasing numbers.

Creative graduates in art, design, craft and media subjects are well-equipped to deal with the challenges of creative working, which they keep firmly in their sights as they navigate their way through the complexities of work, underpinned by their desire to continue with their creative practice. As a result, they experience considerable personal and work satisfaction. Creative graduates are at the forefront in initiating changes in the creative sector, and their tolerance of uncertainty and ability to adapt and to continue to learn fits them for contemporary life and work.

The models for working life presented in this study represent a new way of maintaining life/work balance, highly relevant to a rapidly changing society.

### Creative careers 1999 - 2009

*Creative Graduates Creative Futures* is a major longitudinal study of the early career patterns of graduates in art, design, crafts and media subjects qualifying in 2002, 2003 and 2004 from 26 UK higher education institutions. The research, undertaken between 2008 and 2010, involved first degree and foundation degree UK and international graduates up to six years after graduation. The main survey element of the study in autumn 2008 achieved 3,500 respondents (14 per cent response rate) making it the largest detailed study of its kind, and broadly representative of the eligible courses across participating institutions and the creative HE sector, in terms of the profile of responding graduates. A second stage of qualitative research in September 2009 examined graduates' career paths in more depth and their experiences of work in the recession, the findings from which are due to be published in spring 2010.



*Creative Graduates Creative Futures* contributes to the longest continuous study of occupational choices and working patterns, offering comparable data to the pioneering *Destinations and Reflections* (1999) which followed more than 1,800 graduates from art and design disciplines into their early careers and was one of the first studies to provide evidence of synergy between higher education and growth in the creative industries. Findings demonstrated graduates' generic capability for wider roles, their adaptability, and a multi-tracking approach to working, often combining work with personal development.

These patterns continue in the present study, together with engagement with portfolio working and high levels of self-employment. Larger proportions of graduates now work in the creative industries and in work related to their subject than ten years ago. Other key indicators for change are increases in part-time working, business start-up, self-employment and fixed-term or temporary work, together with a slight fall in full-time employment and a drift away from working in medium-sized enterprises to micro-businesses. These patterns are consistent with recent growth in the creative and cultural sector.

Ten years on, employment growth in the creative and cultural industries and the size of the sector means that graduates continue to contribute very substantially to the creative economy, and, in doing so, they demonstrate approaches to establishing a career that workers in other sectors may benefit from adopting in a rapidly changing economic environment. Indeed, resourceful and adaptable creative graduates are the trail-blazers for other disciplines in engaging with contract and freelance working.

## Characteristics of creative graduates and their careers

The present survey tells us what is distinctive about graduates, their educational experiences and their working lives. The vast majority of graduates engage in work and employment that is creative and closely related to their field of expertise or course of study. They place a high value on their higher education experiences although they would have liked a stronger connection with the professional world on their courses. They stay focused on their career goals and envisage progressing in the same kind of work for the future.

The study reveals resourceful behaviour in the face of the complexities and challenges of finding work and earning a living, with high levels of self-employment and engagement in work of a creative nature, and many sustaining a living by multiple income streams through portfolio careers. Creative graduates are working predominantly as sole traders or in micro businesses that change rapidly and frequently, and the creative industries are highly dependent on these small-scale enterprises.

## The majority of graduates work in creative occupations

- Looking across all graduate experiences since graduating, three out of four graduates had worked in the creative industries and a similar proportion had had a paid permanent job.

- Graduates were asked to describe up to three jobs or work activities they were undertaking at the time of the survey, to take account of portfolio working. More than three quarters (78 per cent) of working graduates were in creative occupations. Half the respondents worked in organisations of ten or fewer workers (in their main job).
- Under one in 20 graduates were unemployed or looking for work at the time of the survey.
- The most common employment sector was the design industry (approximately one quarter of graduates); education at 20 per cent; followed by fine art and fashion/textile design (both at 14 per cent) and work in media production and photography (13 per cent), largely reflecting the expected vocational choices of the sample population.

### **A minority of graduates work in non-creative occupations**

- At the time of the survey, fewer than one in five graduates (18 per cent) in their main job were in work they considered was not creative. Non-creative occupations were very diverse and spread over a wide range of economic sectors, mainly in retailing (four per cent) and in not-for-profit sectors (three per cent), with other sectors such as public service, health and social work accounting for fewer than two per cent of respondents in each.

### **Portfolio working is a major established working pattern**

- The portfolio career represents a model for work that appears to be typical in the creative industries sector, and may be adopted partly by personal preferences and partly by the way in which work in the industry is organised.
- Fifty-two per cent of working graduates were engaged in one main work activity at the time of the survey, tending to work full-time. Many of these had also continued with their creative practice, worked unpaid or freelance since graduating.
- Forty-eight per cent of graduates in work were engaged in multiple activities or portfolio working at the time of the survey, typically combining paid employment with self-employment, working voluntarily, or developing their creative practice. Thirty per cent combined two work activities, 13 per cent had three, and five per cent of graduates combined four different types of work activity. Work was often combined with formal learning.
- This pattern does not change significantly over time, even when graduates are four, five or six years into their careers, and is also confirmed by the high levels of satisfaction with careers to date, the majority of graduates being settled on their career goals.
- We speculate that this pattern of working and learning is established during student life: in which full-time study is combined with relevant work experience, paid and unpaid, and income from part-time term-time and vacation work supports students through their studies.

### Working on a self-employed basis is a key feature of portfolio working

- Just under one half of all graduates had worked on a freelance basis (45 per cent) and around one quarter had started a business during their early careers. At the time of the survey, 23 per cent of respondents were self-employed or undertaking freelance work and 18 per cent were running a business, and this was seen as a serious ambition for the future with 44 per cent of all graduates expressing an interest in running a business as their careers progressed.
- The majority of graduates in self-employed work were in creative occupations and in the creative industries (86 per cent for both). Sole trader status is a major feature of creative graduate activity, with 68 per cent of those self-employed working alone, and the remainder either working collaboratively or creating work for others.
- Where graduates reported self-employed activities as their main job, three fifths were working full-time, but when self-employment was recorded as their secondary/tertiary activity it was part-time.

### Part-time working is a key feature of creative careers

- At the time of the survey, 75 per cent of graduates were working full-time in their main work activity and 25 per cent part-time. The significance of part-time working is most apparent when looking across graduates' combinations of work activities: 79 per cent of graduates in work at the time of the survey were working part-time in at least one of their jobs or work-related activities.

### Unpaid and voluntary work contributes to career progression

- Post-graduation 'internships' and working unpaid are an established feature of the creative industries landscape, as a common strategy for finding work or gaining experience, with 42 per cent of respondents undertaking unpaid or voluntary work or work experience since graduating. At the time of the survey, one quarter (23 per cent) were still in these types of roles, although often as a secondary activity combined with permanent work and/or self-employment. On the whole, these tended to be creative roles and part-time.

### Teaching is an important career destination

- One third (33 per cent) of respondents had experience of teaching (generally in the arts). One in ten graduates had studied for a postgraduate teaching qualification (PGCE). At the time of the survey one in five graduates worked as a teacher (18 per cent) at any level, from schools to higher education, with half of these combining teaching with other work or self-employment. When graduates changed from their initial career goal, it was most frequently towards teaching.

## Graduates rely on combined income streams and are not highly paid

- The widespread feature of unpaid work and internships in the creative industries may depress the earning power of graduates and opens a debate about the true worth of graduates. Around half (48 per cent) of graduates reporting their working situation were earning over £20,000 (gross) at the time of the survey across all their jobs and working activities, and this included 14 per cent of graduates who earned at least £30,000.
- There were concerns about low pay with one third (33 per cent) of respondents earning £15,000 or under, which is less than the average starting salary for a new graduate across disciplines. Pay tended to be lower in creative roles.
- Those in portfolio careers were financially disadvantaged compared with graduates with only one job: 48 per cent of those with at least three jobs or work-related activities earned less than £15,000, compared with 22 per cent of those with one job.

## Graduates gravitate towards London

- Over half (53 per cent) of all respondents (whether working or not) were living in the South of England at the time of the survey: a quarter (26 per cent) in London, 17 per cent in the wider South East, and 10 per cent in the South West of England. The Midlands or East Anglia accounted for 12 per cent, 14 per cent in the North of England, 9 per cent in Scotland or Wales, and a further 12 per cent were living overseas.
- A greater proportion of creative graduates now live in London than did so prior to commencing their undergraduate studies (26 per cent compared to 14 per cent). Graduates living in London and those living overseas were the most likely to be working in a creative occupation across any of their jobs/activities (85 per cent and 83 per cent respectively).

## Graduates are satisfied in their working lives

- Graduates experienced high levels of career satisfaction: three quarters of working graduates (77 per cent) were satisfied with their work situation and four out of five (79 per cent) felt that their work related significantly to art, craft, design and media. Highest levels of overall satisfaction were found for graduates with higher earnings and among those whose work was congruent with their discipline or domain and who also felt that they could be creative in their work.

## Graduates aspire to creative careers and to achieve a good life/work balance

- Graduates overwhelmingly aspired to creative careers. Their specific career goals aligned with their subject discipline, and their career plans were most influenced by a strong desire for new learning. A high value was placed on opportunities to make full use of knowledge and skills, earn a stable income, pursue or maintain creative practice, and have time with family and friends.

- Although four out of five graduates (79 per cent) were in or close to their chosen career, many anticipated at least some change over the next phase of their career, most commonly further training or learning and some degree of upward progression. Very few anticipated a complete change of direction.
- Graduates may be trading off higher earnings in their career choices to achieve more satisfaction in terms of life/work balance, personal development and independence.

### Barriers to career progression are mostly financial

- Twenty per cent of graduates felt they had some way to go to reach their chosen career and 14 per cent felt they were unlikely to do so. A key barrier to career progression was lack of finance to enable individuals to undertake learning to benefit their practice and develop new knowledge, either through postgraduate study, moving to relatively risky but rewarding jobs, or by undertaking low or unpaid roles to gain experience.
- Other career inhibitors were a perceived lack of opportunities, relevant skills or experience, coupled with competition and the difficulties encountered in gaining entry to new areas of work.

## Further study and learning

### Creative graduates are lifelong learners

- Graduates were keen to develop their skills and knowledge, enhance their job prospects, and follow personal interests often related to their creative practice. Almost three quarters of respondents (72 per cent) had undertaken some form of further study, education or training, or independent study/more informal learning since graduating. Four in ten (39 per cent) were undertaking formal further study of some kind at the time of the survey, often supported with paid work.
- One third (33 per cent) of all graduates had undertaken a short course. Engagement in creative arts courses was more common than engagement in business skills courses.
- More than half of graduates had continued to develop their creative practice in some way since graduation, often alongside other work activities.

### Creative graduates place a high value on postgraduate study

- More than one quarter of graduates returned to HE to study at a higher level, with 13 per cent of graduates having studied at masters level, and one in ten following a PGCE. Masters level study was not seen as a route to an academic career, with fewer than one per cent of study at doctorate level, indicating that academic research may not be identified by graduates as a serious career path and this was supported by the very small numbers identified as teaching in HE.
- Key motives for postgraduate study were to enhance job opportunities, develop further knowledge and/or gain a professional qualification.

## The value of a creative education

Active learning through project-based enquiry is central to the creative curriculum in higher education. Students not only learn to solve set problems in a creative way, but they also develop the ability to identify and to redefine problems and to raise and address appropriate issues. Many of the skills and attributes required for creative employment, such as creativity, problem-solving, independence, innovation, enterprise and collaborative working are embedded within the creative learning process, together with more tacit skills such as resourcefulness and handling ambiguity.

### Creative graduates value their creative education

- More than four out of five graduates had participated in shows/exhibitions, peer and self-evaluation, teamwork, contextual studies and teaching by practitioners on their undergraduate courses. They rated most course activities as fairly or very useful, with Personal and Professional Development (PPD), teamwork and teaching by practitioners as the most useful in relation to their careers.
- Creative graduates felt that their creative education had developed the skills required for their careers, rating most highly creativity and innovation, visual skills and presentation skills, but had less well-developed IT, networking and client-facing skills.
- Self-confidence and self-management were considered to be the most important to careers, yet they were felt to be less well-developed than core creative skills. Entrepreneurial skills were the least well developed and also perceived to be the least important for career development, which is interesting given the high incidence of self-employment.
- Just over half the graduates (52 per cent) felt their course had prepared them very or fairly well for the world of work. Respondents would have liked a better appreciation of what creative employment would be like, improved understanding of client needs, training in IT/software, business skills and the practicalities of working freelance.

### Graduates are pro-active in gaining work experience

- Placements were seen as important for gaining insights into working practices and contacts in the industry, and were experienced by 42 per cent of respondents. Just over half of these were doing so as a formal part of their course (57 per cent). Around one in five respondents (18 per cent) had organised their own placements. They tended to find these more useful than those arranged by courses. Placements appeared to be associated with gaining creative work. In an industry dominated by micro-businesses with limited capacity for taking on students, these opportunities are unlikely to increase.
- Informal work experience during vacations and term-time was widespread (64 per cent) but was perceived as less useful to career development.



## Graduates access support from HE after graduation

- Graduates expressed continuing career development needs, and this highlights the importance of progression and the relationship between undergraduate learning, postgraduate study, on-the-job training and continuing professional development (CPD).
- Almost half of graduates had accessed job information and around one-third had taken up opportunities for professional development, networking and careers advice since graduating from higher education institutions. Where these opportunities were not taken, it was most often because graduates were not aware of provision.

## Implications for creative careers

There is more complexity in the inter-action between graduates, creative industries and higher education than in the simple equation of supply and demand. Old models for work, purposes of education, skills agendas and graduate employment are limiting and prevent dealing with a new reality, in which creative practice provides the context for academic study, work experience, employability, professional development, innovation, enterprise and productive careers. In this new reality, work satisfaction is focused on measures such as personal fulfilment and opportunities for creativity and new learning.

HEIs provide an environment that fosters creative practice and encourages important employability skills. A distinctive characteristic of the creative curriculum is that opportunities for transfer of the creative process occur naturally, as students experience different contexts in which to apply their learning through live projects, exhibitions, commissions and learning alongside teacher-practitioners. Further capacity building is required in research communities to nurture academic careers, meet aspirations for new knowledge and innovation in the HE sector, and to bring in the next generation of teacher-practitioners. For the future, it will be important to establish and maintain the foundations for practice-led research at undergraduate level.

In the academic domain, creative practice provides the context for personal and professional development and our findings indicate that students continue to adopt this model after graduation in their portfolio careers – they continue to combine practice, further study and informal learning, and engage simultaneously in paid and unpaid work. It follows, therefore, that it is essential for graduates to put their creative practice at the centre of any discussion that reviews their progression and needs, pre and post-graduation, so they can articulate their strengths confidently and position themselves in relation to future goals.

Limits on industry capacity to provide work placements mean that curriculum innovation needs to build on extending creative practice through collaborative learning. There is a need to explore differentiated models for employer engagement in a sector in which small businesses and freelance professionals work in fluid, collaborative and non-hierarchical models of practice.

Gaining entry into creative work requires graduates to be resourceful and willing to work unpaid to gain necessary experience. The nature and form of voluntary work or unpaid 'internships' for all graduates post-graduation has become controversial in the context of minimum wage legislation and the extent to which graduates are giving free labour. At the same time, valuable experience and industry-related skills can be learned by working in this way. Creative graduates have strategies for coping with unstable employment conditions, and this is significant as we see graduates in all subjects coming into a more uncertain employment market.

The predominance of a project-based work structure in the creative industries sector will continue to draw on a pool of creative, skilled and adaptable workers. These will be individuals who combine or collaborate to respond to client needs, make new work or engage in creative endeavour. At the same time, these workers will be expected to be willing to acquire new learning to respond to specific niche needs of contracts and clients and to continue to work flexibly. It is clear there is work to be done to prepare graduates for the likelihood that they will be self-employed, and for the requirements for creative careers, with appropriate support for progression into work and continuing professional development into their careers.

The resourcefulness of creative graduates and their determinants for successful and satisfying lives provide new career models that have a wider significance for society as a whole.



# 1 Introduction

This chapter:

- explores how the study came about and why it is important, what is in the report and who might be interested in the findings
- discusses what we already know about creative graduates and their careers from earlier studies, in particular *Destinations and Reflections* (D&R), published in 1999
- introduces the context for the employment of creative graduates, the popularity of creative courses, and growth of the creative industries
- provides information about the next stage of the research, outputs and project publications.

*Creative Graduates Creative Futures* is a major longitudinal study of the early career patterns of graduates in art, design, crafts and media practice-based subjects from 26 UK higher education institutions. The research, undertaken between 2008 and 2010, involves first degree and foundation degree UK and international graduates up to six years after graduation.

This report presents the findings of Stage 1: the main survey element of the study in autumn 2008, achieving 3,500 respondents – making it the largest detailed study of its kind.

The findings provide insights into both the value of a creative education and the career progression of those working in the creative and cultural sector of the economy. Creative graduates were broadly satisfied in their working lives, and placed a high value on their higher education experiences. At the same time they provided important critical feedback on aspects of their courses.

The study reveals resourceful and entrepreneurial behaviour in the face of the complexities and challenges presented in finding work and earning a living by creative endeavour. Working patterns show high levels of self-employment and engagement in work of a creative nature, with many sustaining a living in portfolio careers. For creative graduates, a set of distinctive characteristics have emerged, with evidence of life-long learning a significant finding, in which graduates combine self-development and career building through work, creating opportunities, further learning and study.

## 1.1 Background to the study

An ambitious project from the outset, the study is the result of a unique funding partnership involving 26 UK higher education institutions and the Council for Higher Education in Art and Design (CHEAD), led by University of the Arts London. (The 26 partner institutions are listed in the front of this report.) Working with the Institute for Employment Studies, the partners have reached out to 26,806 of their UK and international graduates to explore the experience of a creative education and its influence on career paths up to six years after graduation. The formation of the partnership, the scope of the project and its methodology are explored fully in Chapter 2.

### Stage 1 report

This report presents the findings of the first stage of the research, a quantitative census postal and online survey undertaken in the autumn of 2008, to which 3,500 graduates responded (14 per cent response rate). The survey explored graduates' satisfaction with their higher education experiences, work and further study activities since graduating and their future aspirations. An extensive and comprehensive analysis of data was undertaken by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) and the wider project team, and this report draws from the resulting working document, together with a 200 page appendix of tables (downloadable from the project website: [www.creativegraduates.co.uk](http://www.creativegraduates.co.uk)). Contributions to this report by the project team and editorial team of writers have added contextual information to illuminate the findings further.

### Stage 2 report

The results from Stage 1 informed the focus for Stage 2 qualitative research activity in autumn 2009, involving email survey and depth interviews to explore transition experiences, career facilitators, the multi-stranded nature of working patterns, issues around defining and achieving success and how graduates' circumstances have changed since they were first surveyed in autumn 2008. The Stage 2 report will provide a wealth of individual narratives across the disciplines around graduates' own assessment of who they are, where they are going and what's important to them in their working lives. The findings will contribute to typologies for career patterns to inform plans for nurturing talent in the creative sector. The Stage 2 report is due for publication in spring 2010.

## 1.2 Creative graduates, creative futures?

*Creative Graduates Creative Futures* (CGCF) has attracted wide interest, and is endorsed by key stakeholders such as the Arts Council England, Design Council and Crafts Council. These organisations and advocates for the importance of creativity – for individual fulfilment, and as an economic engine – recognise that this study will inform many agendas, and will tell us in some detail about the working lives of creative practitioners, what contributes to their success and the motivating factors in their career paths.

A perspective on the landscape for higher education and the creative industries by Stuart Bartholomew (see Foreword) poses important questions about their future inter-relationship and its impact:

*‘The relationship of art and design education with the development of a creative economy is critical to understanding how we can continue to produce new talents for the ever-changing economy.’*

Bartholomew, 2010

The discussion begins with some of the key issues informing the background to the study, starting with changes in creative higher education, our understanding about graduate careers and the relationship to the creative sector of our economy.

### 1.3 The rise of creative higher education

Debates about the purposes of higher education acknowledge the wider benefits of a university education and its contribution to economic growth, not just in terms of gross domestic product (GDP):

*‘... our modern conception of what universities could or should be has been somewhat limited. The tendency to see universities primarily as the laboratories of new research and technology has grown particularly acute in the last twenty years ... they also foster other (aspects) of economic growth - talent and tolerance.’*

Florida, 2005, p.251

Higher education is attracting a larger and more diverse student body and social inclusion initiatives are raising young people’s aspirations, providing more flexible and attractive courses and qualifications designed to meet employer needs. For many new students, vocational considerations are important in a time of economic uncertainty, but progression to work from a university education is not necessarily a smooth and predictable outcome. Graduates entering the workplace are having to be more resourceful and adaptable.

Creative arts and design courses in higher education have continued to grow in popularity with an increase of 58 per cent in graduate registrations in full-time first degrees between 1999/2000 and 2007/2008, close to three times greater than the growth for all subjects over the same period (see Table 1.1). This is significant in relation to growth patterns in the creative and cultural sector of the economy.

**Table 1.1: Registrations in full-time first degrees 1999-2007**

Registrations	Creative arts	All subjects
1999/2000	75,770	906,480
2007/2008	119,590	1,108,685
Difference	+ 57.8%	+ 22.3%

Note: Creative arts data includes performance and other creative courses as well as arts and design

Source: full-time first degrees 1999/2000 and 2007/2008, HESA Table 2a

This study takes place against a backdrop of growing recognition of the important role that universities play in relation to enterprise and innovation, and in maintaining the growth of the creative economy:

*'We will do more to understand and analyse the contribution of our creative universities. We will explain the range of talent and skills they require and seek to ensure that all those who have talent, whatever their background, can make a career in the creative industries.'*

DCMS, 2008, p.30

For our economy to flourish, government says it wants creative people with good ideas, people who can innovate, come up with solutions to problems and create enterprises for new services and products in a 'knowledge-based' economy. Regional agendas rely on the encouragement of 'knowledge transfer' and retention of talent and look to universities to provide this. Creative subject disciplines in higher education have an important part to play in this respect, as the nature of their knowledge base is rooted in the creative process.

For this reason, the focus for CGCF research is on practice-based subjects (learning through creative practice) because experiential learning is at the heart of the pedagogies of creative practice-based education, and directly fosters an approach to learning that encourages a combination of convergent and divergent thinking, risk-taking and entrepreneurial attributes that play an essential role in problem creation and solution – at the heart of our creative economy.

*'At the centre of pedagogy for creative practice-based subjects, as distinct from the broader group of practice-based subjects, is a notion of divergent thinking where solutions develop through intelligent problem creation and resolution.'*

NESTA/ADM-HEA (2007), p.29

The distinctive features of a creative education are discussed in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

Significant innovation in creative arts higher education has taken place in relation to pedagogy, with the advent of the Subject Centre for Art, Design and Media (Higher Education Academy) and established Centres of Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELTs) in creative arts institutions, and the embedding of entrepreneurial and employability learning within the student experience.

Widespread interest in matters of employability for creative arts graduates by UK universities and colleges represents a long-held belief in the sector that short-term employment data does not fully represent the transition of creative graduates into work. At the same time, there is growing interest in informed debate about the balance between providing for skill and industry needs and the wider learning value of a creative education, in the context of increasing numbers of students entering creative subjects and the lack of detailed information about the career destinations of their predecessors.

## 1.4 Graduate employment in the 21st century

Notions of what we understand to be graduate level jobs and a linear career path are no longer realistic for students in any subject discipline, as graduates engage with a diversity

of work, many working in smaller enterprises, on temporary contracts or on a freelance basis. The expected increase in unemployment in the face of recession places additional pressures on graduates and brings into question the cost and value of a degree level education. In the modern workplace, the prevalence of short-term contracts and temporary work is a feature of recession, and it may be here to stay, with organisations and businesses reducing overheads in an increasingly competitive economy. The rise of the portfolio career is becoming an important feature of the workplace in all sectors (see Chapter 7).

What do we know about creative graduates' career paths? The UK Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) publishes statistics annually on the Destinations of Leavers in Higher Education (DLHE) based on quantitative data gathered by universities on the primary occupation of graduates six months after qualifying. The major limitations of these data are the reference date and the lack of detail about graduates' experiences. DLHE records the position at a time when many graduates are in a transitional stage and does not provide an accurate demonstration of the long-term value of a degree-level education for future employment. Creative graduates do not present well in these statistics with high unemployment rates compared with other subjects and lower than average take-up of permanent employment.

Ten years ago, 14 institutions from the art and design higher education sector collaborated on an in-depth study of graduates' career experiences up to nine years after qualifying, to establish the longer-term value of their creative education. This study, *Destinations and Reflections* (D&R) (Blackwell and Harvey, 1999) involved a sample of almost 2000 graduates, the first detailed survey since the early 1970s (Ritchie, 1972). At the same time the Crafts Council undertook a similar inquiry into the career paths of crafts graduates (Press and Cusworth, 1998).

D&R was a landmark in British cultural enquiry and one of the first to demonstrate synergy between higher education and the creative industries growth. Findings demonstrated graduates' generic capability for wider roles, their adaptability, and a multi-tracking approach to working involving a combination of work and development activity. In constructing their own career paths, graduates applied considerable ingenuity and tenacity, often engaging in collaborative working. The study found that a creative arts and design education encourages creativity, invention, resourcefulness and entrepreneurial approaches – much of it tacit learning:

*'Art and design, probably more than any other sector, develops graduates' critical and creative abilities and their imagination.'*

Blackwell and Harvey, 1999, p.viii

However, graduates considered their skills in key areas such as written communication, numeracy, team-working and self-promotion to be less well developed. The research also found courses were lacking in business and professional studies, and that career guidance and preparation for the transition were critical areas of concern.

What marks creative arts and design graduates out from those in other subjects, is that they have a longer gestation period before establishing their careers, and a higher proportion become self-employed. This is closely linked to the nature of creative practice

and its development in which practice is often inseparable from, and central to, the growth of the individual.

D&R demonstrated that graduates are motivated by creative practice development, ethical considerations and social responsibility, and show a pre-disposition for work in education, community and the not-for-profit sectors.

Significant changes in the creative industries, in higher education and in the graduate labour market in the 10 years since D&R make the new survey timely, as higher education institutions are keen to gather enhanced evidence of activity after graduation to inform curriculum and employability strategies.

Other more recent studies are referred to in this report, and in particular parallels are drawn with findings from *The Art of Innovation* (Bakshi et al., 2008) which followed the career paths of more than 500 fine artists from Central St Martins College of Art and Design to explore their contribution to innovation and society, the ways in which artists worked, their values and lifestyles.

## 1.5 The rise of the creative industries

The UK Creative and Cultural Industries sector is defined by economic activity that is 'based on individual creativity, skill and talent.' (DCMS, 2008) These industries also have the potential to create wealth and jobs through developing intellectual property, and include organisations and businesses defined by their creative output and more broadly include our cultural heritage linked to tourism. Sub-sectors include: advertising, architecture, art and antiques markets, computer and video games, crafts, design, designer fashion, film and video, music, literature and publishing, theatre and performing arts, software and TV and radio.

*Destinations and Reflections* was published as the creative and cultural economic sector began its trajectory and is now '... the largest creative sector in the EU and relative to GDP probably the largest in the world' (Andari et al., 2007). The creative industries have experienced a remarkable period of growth since the beginning of the century. This is acknowledged in the global reputations of many of our leading creative enterprises, cultural organisations and individuals and in quantitative performance indicators, in which the sector accounts for 7.3 per cent of the economy, employing one million people with another 800,000 working in creative occupations.<sup>1</sup>

Over the past 20 years, employment in the creative sector has grown at an average of 4.2 per cent per annum, which is four and a half times the rate of employment growth experienced across all industries during the same period. Recent predictions suggest that creative and cultural businesses are well placed to succeed after the recession, and that further growth is expected:

*'Significantly, the projected figures for 2009 suggest that the creative and cultural industries are growing in employment terms by nearly five per cent, back to pre-recession levels (compared to negative growth across the UK in general). Moving further*

<sup>1</sup> Source of all data for creative industries sector: CCSkills *Impact and Footprint*, 2008/2009.



*into the future, up until 2017, employment in the industry is projected to grow significantly, perhaps by as many as 150,000 more people, the majority of which are likely to be in managerial, professional and highly skilled occupations.'*

CCSkills, 2009

This is a fast changing sector with the emergence of new areas of creative applications such as computer gaming, social networking and greater inter-disciplinary working in many forms of creative expression. It is widely recognised that continued success is dependent on encouraging cultural diversity and synergies of practice, nurturing emerging talent and providing opportunities for individuals and organisations to flourish, hence the need for research to ensure education and support encourages and optimises those talents.

*'There is a shortage of industry specific skills in key creative industries and of knowledge on how to commercialise creative ideas. This is also true of the wider soft skills which allow tacit knowledge to be exchanged and developed. The UK's powerful art and design school tradition needs to be celebrated, nurtured and developed.'*

Andari et al., 2007, p.23

Set against a backdrop of the most serious global economic recession in the last 80 years, we are now experiencing the impact on the labour market with high levels of unemployment anticipated amongst new graduates and across the population as a whole. Government recognises the key role of the creative sector in the economic recovery and the importance of encouraging the high-level skills involved in creative endeavour:

*'The free-flowing creativity encouraged in many British art, design and technical schools and colleges is widely recognised as having contributed to our success in the creative sector.'*

DCMS, 2008, p.20

All key players involved in the development of the creative sector need to understand the challenges faced by graduates entering these areas, both now in economic recession and more importantly to inform their future working lives. Clearly the project is timely, as we need to update our understanding of how the sector works, anticipate its changes and develop responsive mechanisms that enable us to capitalise on the 'free-flowing creativity,' expressed above.

*Creative Graduates Creative Futures* seeks to discover the issues and challenges the 21st century graduate is facing and the complexities of their working lives, and so inform HE and government strategies for nurturing creative talent through education and into the workplace (DCMS, 2008).

## 1.6 Aims

More specifically, the research aims to:

- Gain a fuller understanding of destinations and career patterns to inform academic development in creative arts and design in areas such as curriculum design, effective learning and teaching and careers guidance.
- Evidence the value of a creative and cultural education for different spheres of employment.

- Present information that will enable government, HE Funding Councils and other agencies to provide more effective support to the creative and cultural industries, particularly in the encouragement of new enterprises.

The background to the study and research methodology is explored in Chapter 2.

## 1.7 Audiences

The research will be of interest to a wide audience: government departments and policy makers for higher education and creative industries, funding councils, HEIs and their staff and students, teachers, careers advisers and prospective students, and graduates themselves. The findings will contribute to understanding in three key areas:

- **A fuller exploration of the creative sector**, how it operates, the opportunities available and career progression will inform strategies for sustaining creative industries growth, contribute to curriculum planning to provide the right support, and improve employer engagement with higher education.
- **Evidence relating to how graduates have applied their learning** in a diversity of work roles will provide creative career models, demonstrate the wider value of a creative education and open up employment aspirations and career choices for students.
- **Intelligence on continuing professional development needs** will help in the planning and timing of provision both within the industry and in collaboration with further and higher education.

The timing of *Creative Graduates Creative Futures*, at a pivotal point for the global economy, will provide important intelligence on how graduates are faring in the economic downturn, as the research team embarks on the more qualitative elements of the research in Stage 2. Although, of course, this information may need further appraisal in the light of the medium-term impact of the recession on the sector.

## 1.8 Stage 1 research report

This report presents the detailed findings from Stage 1 of *Creative Graduates Creative Futures* research activity (undertaken between September – December 2008). The report:

- Achieves a body of data that is representative of the creative graduate population and allows for analysis to focus on issues facing graduates at the point of transition and the experiences of graduates from different disciplines in their early careers.
- Goes beyond contemporary national surveys of graduate outcomes (HESA) undertaken six months after graduation, to capture experiences further into careers, taking account of portfolio working, how graduates access opportunities, their satisfactions with their working lives and their future aspirations – with the aim of understanding the motivations behind career decisions and outcomes.
- Explores in some detail graduates' reflections on their higher education experience, the skills they developed and the value of postgraduate study and continuing professional



development to their career progression – contributing to our understanding of the value and influence of a creative education.

- Provides the opportunity to examine graduate retention and mobility by UK region/nation, the experiences of different subject disciplines, and, for the first time, the careers of international graduates, ethnic groups and those with a disability.
- Presents comparative data to evidence changes in working patterns in the 10 years since *Destinations and Reflections*.

Overall, the findings provide a context for the innovative work being undertaken by HEIs in curriculum development, and at regional level in areas such as employer engagement, entrepreneurship and provision for continuing professional development.

## 1.9 Stage 2 outputs and dissemination

The Stage 2 research report will be accompanied by a full-colour brochure providing real career stories for creative arts and design disciplines, the kinds of work graduates do, the routes in, what's important to them in their working lives and how their careers map out. This will be specifically aimed at students, graduates and parents of those considering a creative education to provide a lively and informed picture of the kinds of experiences, pitfalls and satisfactions graduates in these subjects might expect to encounter.

The project website: [www.creativegraduates.com](http://www.creativegraduates.com) provides: summary findings; graduate career profiles and case studies; a focus for the dissemination of findings, events and conferences including free downloads of publications and pay to download research reports; and information about current and future project activity.

## 1.10 Next steps

The large body of data generated by this study will benefit from further sub-set analysis, for example by subject discipline, ethnic group, able/disabled groups which are beyond the scope of this report. The partnership will commission further studies and papers as the project extends. The study will also provide a rationale for priorities for further research into graduate employment, and the methodology may be applied to other subject sub-sets or disciplines. It is envisaged that follow-on studies and a regular ten-year longitudinal study will be proposed for the creative HE sector.

## 2 Project development and methodology

This chapter reviews:

- the background to the study leading to the formation of the Creative Graduates Partnership
- how the project was developed and managed in consultation with partners
- the process for determining research priorities and questions and the overall methodological approach
- how the eligible graduate sample was identified and the courses from which they were drawn
- survey administration and methods for encouraging response rates; the pilot process
- methods for analysing the quantitative census questionnaire
- plans for Stage 2: qualitative research.

### 2.1 The Creative Graduates Partnership

In autumn 2007, a small working group, chaired by Elizabeth Rouse, Deputy Rector at University of the Arts London (UAL), was formed through the membership of the Council for Higher Education in Art and Design (CHEAD) to consider a proposal for a UK-wide study of creative graduates and their career paths and how this might be taken forward. The proposal was initiated by Julia Yates, Head of Creative Careers at UAL in response to the need for more detailed intelligence about the career patterns and experiences of graduates to inform the work of the careers team and the provision of support for students and graduates, and at the same time there was growing interest in a large scale study amongst the wider higher education community, as discussed in Chapter 1.

Preliminary research into the scope and feasibility of the project was undertaken by Linda Ball, Research Fellow at UAL, resulting in a formal proposal that was taken to CHEAD. There was a keen interest in the project, as the findings were potentially beneficial to the creative higher education sector as a whole.

At the same time, partner institutions would benefit by receiving disaggregated data for their own graduate respondents to the survey in the form of core tables, thus enabling them to review their own graduates' career experiences and satisfaction with courses. The data would provide important evidence to inform curriculum development and employability strategies, as well as improve understanding of the working lives of creative graduates.

By spring 2008, 26 institutions had been recruited through CHEAD, forming the partnership to support and fund the research, provide access to the graduates, and contribute to the direction and focus for the study. A full list of participating institutions is provided at the front of this report.

The partnership is representative of CHEAD (41 per cent of the member institutions) in terms of the balance of type and size of institutions: specialist art institutions, metropolitan universities; those with more rural campuses and the spread of institutions across the UK.

All partner institutions contributed to the research costs in proportion to the size of their graduate cohorts in creative arts and design subjects, based on HESA data. Partner funding was augmented with a donation from CHEAD.

## 2.2 Preliminaries

In early 2008, Linda Ball was appointed as Project Director, funded and supported directly by UAL. As lead institution, UAL provided a home for the project and financial administration. Project personnel were appointed and agreement was reached on the roles, responsibilities and protocols for the Project Director, steering and management groups, and partners.

Aims and outcomes for the project were agreed, informed by the scoping study and research questions were debated with partners and stakeholders.

The project budget was confirmed and the partnership was formed, with UAL as lead institution.

Agreements with HEIs were formalised in relation to their responsibilities, payment schedules and the responsibilities of the project team, management and steering groups.

A tendering process was undertaken to appoint an independent research organisation resulting in the selection of the Institute for Employment Studies (IES). Research costs, outline methodology, deliverables, project management and contracts were agreed.

A detailed methodology was developed and project timetable agreed.

Key issues were identified to debate with partners and other stakeholder organisations to inform survey methods and design.

## 2.3 Determining the priorities for the research

The scoping work, commissioned in autumn 2007 by the first working group, identified key issues for exploration in the context of the broader landscape of higher education, industry and employability agendas. The overarching aim for the study was to demonstrate the enduring contribution of art, design, and media graduates to the creative industries, other sectors of the economy, culture, education and society as a whole.

### 2.3.1 Consulting with stakeholders

Early in 2008, a consultation process began to inform the research questions, in which key issues were explored in relation to current agendas, through presentations and meetings via the steering and management groups, CHEAD Business Meetings and Links Group, and more widely with the Art Design Media Subject Centre (Higher Education Academy), Design Council, Arts Council England, Crafts Council, and the related Sector Skills Councils.

A profile for the survey was established throughout the higher education creative sector by presentations at key conferences during the summer and autumn 2008, and similarly for early emerging findings in spring 2009.

### 2.3.2 Consulting with partners

A democratically funded project of this kind requires a high degree of consultation to ensure full participation by partners as primary stakeholders. Partners' involvement went beyond funding the study, and it was important to put in place a process that ensured they were represented and consulted in constructing the focus and direction for the research inquiry, assembling the starting population, and being fully engaged in successfully executing the fieldwork to achieve good response rates.

The Project Director and the IES team worked closely with the partner institutions and CHEAD in early summer 2008 to develop the direction for the research through a series of consultation workshops around the UK:

- to test the currency of issues identified for exploration in the study and how they might contribute to survey design
- to confirm eligible courses, population numbers and survey administration methods to ensure good response rates.

Partners had some wide-ranging ambitions for the survey and what it could do for them. They wanted to gather evidence that would enable them to:

- communicate the value of a creative education to students, parents, graduates, employers and other stakeholders
- inform course provision and curriculum development at undergraduate level and for continuing professional development (CPD)

- inform strategies for enterprise, employability, widening participation, national and regional agendas.

More specific interests were:

- high-level skills development and their application in work settings (creative transfer)
- currency of relatively new course offers and perceived value of course innovations such as enterprise
- career progression relating to enterprise and business start up
- provision and support for graduates to seek advice and CPD
- graduates' motivations for working in and sustaining creative practice
- complexities of career paths and changes in aspirations before and during entry into careers
- 'real' career stories and case studies to feed back into courses
- evidence of growth of new sectors, such as electronic media
- graduate retention and mobility.

Meetings with stakeholders and consultations with partners continued as the project progressed to test reactions to emerging findings and to inform the agenda for the later stages of the survey.

Following the consultation period, the IES team, working with the Management Group, assembled the priorities for the research (see Chapter 1) together with a discussion of their relationship to the different agendas and stakeholders.

The Project Director undertook a literature review of other contemporary graduate studies and published reports on policy and strategy for higher education (HE) and the creative industries sector to ensure the currency of the enquiry and to provide comparative data for the research reports. Key findings are introduced where relevant in this report and included in the bibliography.

A suitable methodology was designed by IES in consultation with the Management Group to elicit the evidence required. It was decided to conduct a survey in progressive stages using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Research activity was spread between summer 2008 and spring 2010.

In this report we present findings from Stage 1 of the research undertaken in autumn 2008. Stage 2 will be completed early in 2010.

## 2.4 Stage 1: quantitative census survey

The next part of this report outlines the research approach used, discusses the method by which the sample of creative graduates was identified and contacted, the means in which individuals could respond, and the methods used to encourage a good response rate.

### 2.4.1 Postal and online survey

The main quantitative approach was through a postal survey (and parallel online survey) of the graduate population (26,806), asking about: all activities and work since qualifying including further study; graduates' experiences of HE, including skills developed and perceptions about career preparation; continued contact/support from HE; further study and continuing professional development undertaken; current work activities, career motivations and future aspirations.

### 2.4.2 Preparing the sample

During the summer 2008, IES and the Project Director at UAL worked with the partner institutions to support them in both identifying all of their eligible graduates and researching the most up-to-date and reliable addresses for these alumni. The latter was particularly important as the methodology relied upon institutions having good quality contact details to achieve the best response rates.

HE Institutions across the UK are currently improving their contacts with former students and the methods for updating these contacts, as individuals move, particularly through alumni associations and careers services. However, our target population graduated between four and six years ago when graduate information was relatively sparse.

Consultation workshops with representatives from the partner institutions provided an important opportunity to discuss the best methods for collecting contact details, including: using parental addresses, working with alumni associations, consulting with tutors, and placing adverts on institutions' websites, in trade magazines and related websites. There was support for using incentives to encourage a good response rate.

### 2.4.3 Eligible courses

During the consultation period, the range and level of courses to be included within the scope of the project was discussed and finalised, and individual institutions were provided with detailed instructions to determine their eligible graduates from their own relevant courses. Eligible graduates were drawn from full-time first degree or foundation degree courses at the partner institutions, in practice-based art, design, craft and media courses, completing their studies in 2001/02, 2002/03 and 2003/04 and included students of UK, EU and international domicile.

By late summer 2008, a final sample of 26,806 graduates with contact details was identified across the 26 institutions that would effectively allow for a census of the eligible graduate population. Chapter 3 discusses the nature of this sample and the representativeness of the response rate.

### 2.4.4 Forming the survey questions

The process for determining the research priorities (see Section 2.3 above) provided the starting point for the design of the survey instrument, in combination with the earlier 1998 *Destinations and Reflections* questionnaire. The new survey questionnaire comprised

an eight-page A4 booklet. This allowed for more focused data collection and analysis and, where possible, key questions from the 1998 survey were replicated to allow for comparison of graduate experiences over time.

However, it was important to reduce the size of the questionnaire to minimise the risk of a poor response rate resulting from lengthy questionnaires in a climate of survey fatigue. The vast majority of questions were closed questions (ie tick boxes) for ease of completion with some limited space for free text answers.

The questions covered:

- experiences of HE and its perceived value – including perception of skills developed, and course activities that were valued, including work placements – to explore preparation for the labour market and impact on careers
- activities since graduating to explore the range of economic activities undertaken and experience of creative work
- current employment and wider work-related activities to explore the kinds of work that graduates do, where and how they work and their earnings
- further study, education or training to understand the extent and nature of continuing professional development
- career goals and motivations to understand what graduates aspire to do, how close they are to achieving this, and their expectations for the future
- background information about graduates and their study patterns to explore the impact these have on experiences in HE and beyond.

The questionnaire also collected contact details and an indication of willingness to participate in Stage 2 of the study.

#### 2.4.5 Piloting the survey and questionnaire

Given the scale of the survey and involvement of institutions in its administration, it was important to test the sampling process, the quality of contact details and the survey process.

In the summer of 2008, two partner institutions selected a sample of graduates to contact (100 in each). The questionnaire was piloted with this group of 200 graduates to check the survey response rate, seek feedback on different methods of encouraging a response, and look for any issues with particular questions.

A small number of interviews and focus groups took place to explore in more detail individuals' reaction to the survey instrument.



### 2.4.6 Encouraging a good response rate

In recent years, response rates to surveys have been falling owing to survey fatigue, and so a number of methods were tested and then used to encourage the best possible response rate:

- a short, clear and easy to complete questionnaire
- parallel survey methods – both postal and online
- a large font version and support for completing the survey (for those experiencing difficulties)
- one full postal reminder followed by additional email, text and telephone reminders (where possible)
- a prize draw, allowing for one key prize and 20 runner up prizes (in high street store vouchers)
- a donation to a named charity for each completed response (respondents could select from three charities)
- a project website providing information about the study as the project progressed including case studies of graduates and headline findings

Leading up to and during the survey, partner institutions were encouraged to raise awareness of the survey through promotion to staff and to alumni via their networks and in the press.

### 2.4.7 Administering the survey

Partner institutions were responsible for mailing survey questionnaires to eligible graduates on behalf of the research team. In this way, the survey complied with data protection legislation, with no third party organisation having access to graduates' contact details.

Care was taken to minimise the burden on institutions by providing ready-printed survey packs (prepared separately for UK and international addresses) to be mailed. Institutions provided IES with key information about their eligible graduate populations (by gender, age, domicile, year of graduation and classification of degree) to enable the representativeness of the responding group to be calculated.

The survey was launched in September 2008 when partners mailed their survey packs. These packs included the postal survey questionnaire, an introductory letter from the head of the partner institution, and a reply paid envelope in which to return the completed questionnaire directly to IES. A second reminder mailing was undertaken by partners to all their eligible graduates in October to encourage a good response rate.

A web-based survey was available for graduates to complete online if they preferred. They were directed to the appropriate site in the letter that accompanied the postal



version of the questionnaire. Partner institutions also emailed their eligible graduates with information about the survey and a link to the online questionnaire.

A large font version of the questionnaire was available (as a download from the project website) and graduates could also contact the research team to have their responses to the questions taken by telephone. The survey was closed at the beginning of December 2008.

### 2.4.8 Analysis

Completed questionnaires and online submissions were given a unique identifier. A coding frame was established for the open text responses (although the full text was also recorded verbatim) and the data was entered into a statistical package (SPSS) for analysis. It was checked for consistency prior to analysis.

The IES team presented emerging findings early in 2009 for discussion to the CGCF management group, who provided additional reflections and comments to aid the analysis. A comprehensive research report was presented to the management group in June 2009, including extensive sets of tables enabling the results for different groups against the break variables to be compared.

Much of the analysis was descriptive, exploring the relationship between variables and looking for and describing statistically significant associations. Various tests were used to detect significant relationships including: chi-square tests, t-tests and Anovas.

The findings from the IES report are not published here in their entirety because of the volume of data, so the editorial team have eliminated small-scale results that do not play a significant part in the bigger picture. Further interrogation of the complete dataset is planned to examine the experiences of specific groups, by subject and background characteristics, and to test the validity of findings in the light of contextual research.

A full set of tables are included in an external appendices, which can be downloaded from the project website. Each table indicates the size and the nature of the responding group and highlights statistically significant differences (usually with an asterix).

## 2.5 Stage 2: qualitative email survey and depth interviews

Stage 2 of the research provides rich data about how graduates are faring in the economic recession with two further qualitative strands in autumn 2009, with findings to be published in spring 2010:

1. **An email follow-up survey of 2,000+ respondents** involving a short questionnaire inviting text-based responses. Graduates were asked how their careers/jobs had changed since they were last contacted. Themes emerging from the main survey were explored further such as the time taken to establish oneself in a career, challenges faced in making the transition to work or professional practice, career facilitators, and specific CPD needs for the near future.
2. A small number of **in-depth telephone interviews** with a sample of graduates to explore in greater detail transitions to the labour market and early career experiences –

particularly the 'portfolio' nature of early career development experienced by creative arts graduates, and issues around defining and achieving success.

The interval between the two stages has provided a period for reflection on the results of Stage 1, to help formulate the priorities for enquiries in Stage 2.

The timing of Stage 2 is fortuitous, in the light of the economic downturn and the opportunity to gather evidence about how graduates circumstances have changed in the past year. This second round of research produces much useful information about the strategies graduates use to sustain their practice, find work and employment, and gives an indication of patterns of growth or decline of the creative and cultural industries sector.

## 2.6 Project website

The project website: **[www.creativegraduates.com](http://www.creativegraduates.com)** was established early on as an important method of communication and to raise the profile of the survey with stakeholders and graduates taking part in the study. At first, the site provided background to the study, downloadable position papers and research bulletins, progress reports and, leading up to survey activity, a graduate page about how to take part with a link to the online questionnaire.

As research activity progressed, the website included emerging findings, project news, downloadable research reports and new graduate profiles. It was important to encourage graduates to continue to participate in the study for Stage 2, and, in the email survey, they were sent the link to the website to view emerging findings and invited to contribute their own career profiles.

Communication with partners was considerably enhanced with a private partners' page, with newsletters, survey administration and progress reports, results of consultation meetings and discussion, presentations of early findings, as well as partners' suggestions for enhancing the methodology.

## 3 Sample profile

This chapter:

- contains key information about the nature and size of our responding group of graduates qualifying in 2002, 2003 and 2004, drawn from practice-based art, design, craft and media courses in the 26 partner UK universities and colleges
- examines the representativeness of our responding group of graduates, by comparing them to the total graduate population surveyed and to the wider HE student body
- reviews the background of responding graduates and their educational characteristics including routes to HE - and how these interact
- makes comparisons with the graduate sample for *Destinations and Reflections* (D&R) (Blackwell and Harvey, 1999).

### 3.1 The graduate population for the survey

The following discussion explores the representativeness of the starting sample for the study and the group of respondents, compared with the total graduate population in creative arts and in all subjects. We have examined representativeness by background characteristics of the graduates, by subject and by other variables.

CGCF has 26 partner institutions representing 41 per cent of the CHEAD membership, compared to 14 institutions in D&R, with nearly double the number of respondents to our survey questionnaire (3,478 eligible returns compared to 1,875 for D&R). Partner institutions are listed at the front of this report.

### 3.2 Eligibility and overall response rate for census questionnaire survey

As discussed in Chapter 2, Stage 1 of the research involved a census questionnaire survey of eligible graduates from the 26 partner institutions:

- those from 2002, 2003 and 2004 graduating cohorts
- from full-time first degree and foundation degrees

- who had studied in art, design, craft and media practice subjects.

(For a full list of subject disciplines and groupings, see Appendix 2: Subject groups and disciplines.)

In September 2008, 26,806 graduates were contacted and invited to take part in the survey to explore their early career experiences. When the survey was closed in December 2008, a total of 3,603 completed questionnaires had been received – 2,710 on paper and 893 online.

A number of ineligible questionnaires were identified (125) made up of respondents who had either not studied at one of the participating institutions, had studied an ineligible course/subject, or had completed a sub-degree level qualification (other than a foundation degree). These ineligible cases are not included in the analysis outlined in this report. When removed, this leaves a total of 3,478 eligible cases, representing a response rate of 13 per cent.

However, a substantial number of questionnaires (1,859) were returned by the Post Office, as they had failed to reach their intended addressee. This would suggest that at least seven per cent of our target population did not get the opportunity to respond to the survey. If these are taken into account, we have an adjusted response rate of 14 per cent.

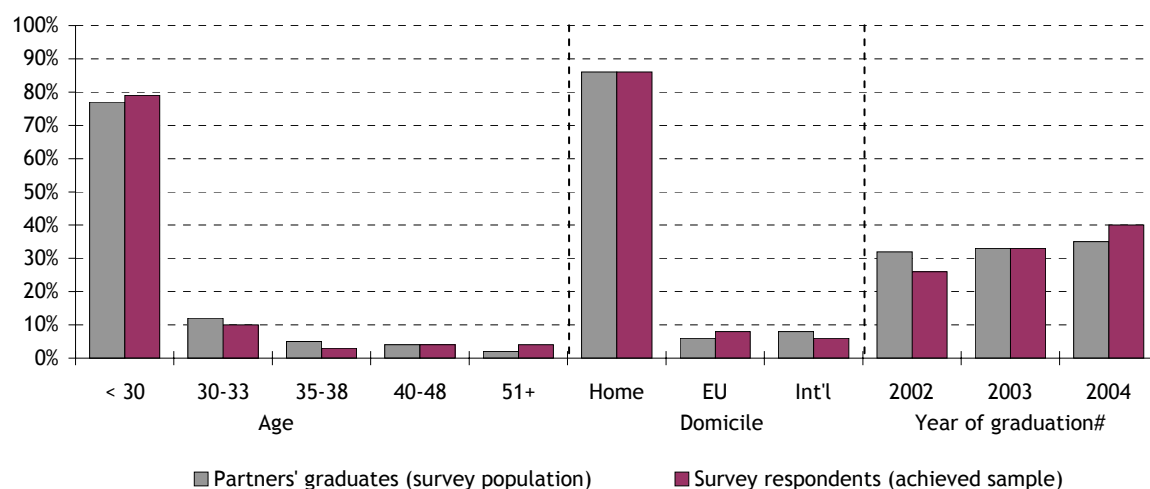
In the current climate of falling response rates coupled with challenges in keeping up to date addresses for individuals who left their institutions between four and six years ago, this is a satisfactory response rate. More importantly this provides a large number of cases to analyse and enables us to explore the experiences of particular sub-groups of graduates, which was a key aim of the project.

More than 2,000 graduates agreed to be contacted again in Stage 2 of the study (September 2009), for the qualitative elements of the research via short email questionnaire and between 30 and 50 telephone interviews.

### 3.3 Survey representativeness based on key characteristics

We have used information supplied by the partner institutions about their graduates (target population) to gain an idea of the representativeness of our group of responding graduates (achieved sample). This enables us to compare the distribution of our achieved sample with the distribution of the target population across several key characteristics: age, gender, domicile, year of graduation, and classification of degree. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 and Table 3.1 show in more detail how the profiles compare, and where the achieved sample differs to the population, as it does slightly in relation to gender, year of graduation and classification of degree.

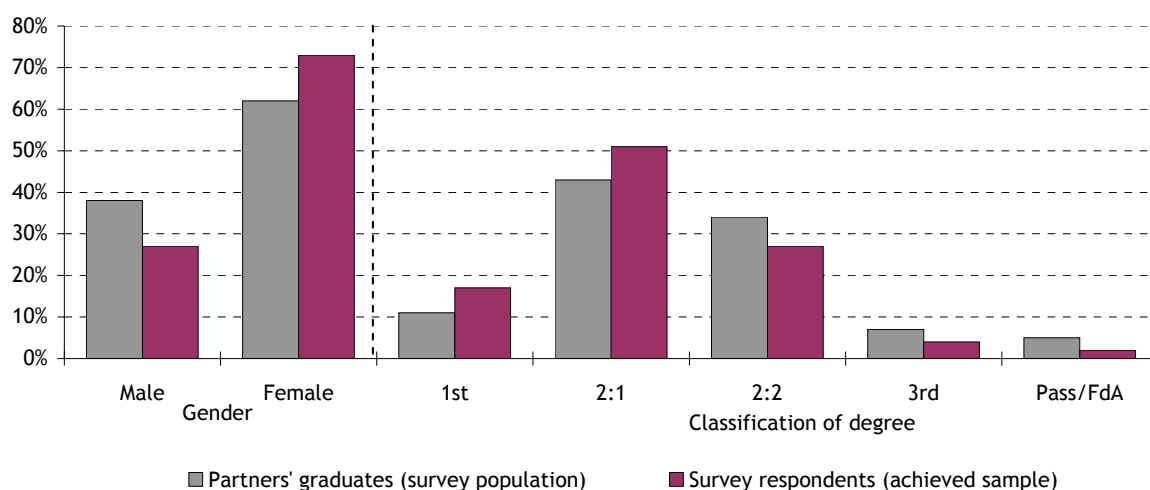
The potential effect of individual key characteristics such as age, domicile, gender, year of graduation and degree class, on experiences and outcomes is explored throughout the report.

**Figure 3.1: Survey representativeness: age, domicile and year of graduation**

Note: Figures include respondents graduating in all years (unless otherwise stated)

Note: Only those graduating in 2002, 2003, and 2004

*Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Sample Table 1*

**Figure 3.2: Survey representativeness: gender and classification of degree**

Note: Figures include respondents graduating in all years (unless otherwise stated)

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Sample Table 1; Tables App. F4, F3, A6, F2 and A6*

**Table 3.1: Total survey population and responses**

	Total survey population (N)	Responses (N)	Total survey population (%)	Responses (%)	Response rate <sup>#</sup> (%)
All graduates	26,806	3,478	100	100	13.0
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	10,187	947	38	27	9.3
Female	16,526	2,508	62	73	15.2
(Unknown)		(23)	—	—	—
<b>Age group (at time of survey)</b>					
Less than 30	20,592	2,717	77	79	13.2
30-33	3,329	346	12	10	10.4
35-38	1,206	113	5	3	9.4
40-48	956	147	4	4	15.4
50+	621	122	2	4	19.6
(Unknown)		(33)	—	—	—
<b>Classification of degree</b>					
First	2,925	590	11	17	20.2
Upper second	11,404	1,750	43	51	15.3
Lower second	8,898	918	34	27	10.3
Third	1,853	130	7	4	7.0
Pass/FdA	1,245	76	5	2	6.1
(Unknown)		(14)	—	—	—
<b>Student domicile status</b>					
Home	22,865	2,924	86	86	12.8
EU	1,699	267	6	8	15.7
Int'l	2,142	216	8	6	10.1
(Unknown)		(71)	—	—	—
<b>Year finished degree</b>					
Before 2002	—	71	—	(2)*	na
2002	7,949	839	32	26(25)*	10.6
2003	8,292	1,062	33	33(31)*	12.8
2004	8,845	1,285	35	40(38)*	14.5
After 2004	—	167	—	(5)*	na
(Unknown)		(54)	—	—	—

Note: Figures include respondents graduating in all years (unless otherwise stated)

Note: \* Figures in the 'Year finished degree' group in brackets show those graduating in all years.

Note: <sup>#</sup> Response rate does not take into account PORs (ie is the unadjusted response rate)

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Tables App. F4, F3, A6, F2 and A6; Sample Table 1*

## Age and domicile

Home domicile is determined by where graduates lived prior to their studies and is split into three groups – whether they were a UK domiciled student (2,924 in number or 86 per cent), a European Union student (267 or eight per cent), or an overseas student (216 or six per cent). Looking at home domicile and at age, the achieved sample profile is comparable to that of the overall target population (generally within one or two percentage points).

## Gender

As is often found in surveys, women (73 per cent of achieved sample ) were more likely to respond than men (27 per cent) – this pattern could be driven by both motivation to respond, as women are generally more engaged with research, and by ability to contact, as women are generally less mobile than men. As a result, men are slightly under-represented in our achieved sample (27 per cent compared to 38 per cent in the total survey population), although the overall pattern still reflects the target population as a whole with the number of women far outweighing the number of men. It is worth noting this gender bias as it may have an effect on the subject profile of the achieved sample and on activities since graduating.

## Year of graduation

Those graduating more recently were more likely to have responded to the survey. This pattern of response might be expected as contact details become less reliable over time, and so is likely to be driven by the currency of contact details rather than motivation to participate. This means that there is some under-representation of 2002 graduates (at 26 per cent of the achieved sample compared to 32 per cent of the total survey population) and a slight over-representation of 2004 graduates (40 per cent compared to 35 per cent) in our achieved sample when examining the career outcomes of graduates as a whole.

However, despite this slight bias, the sample profile still broadly reflects that of the target population. Respondents were surveyed at least four years after graduating and the slight variation in response rates over time would not be expected to affect the overall pattern of employment to any great extent.

## Degree classification

Those who did well in their degree studies were marginally more likely to respond to the survey. Again this pattern of response might be expected, as those who have a more positive association with their time in higher education may be more likely to participate. This means there is minor over-representation at the top end of the classification range (17 per cent of the achieved sample compared to 11 per cent of the total survey population) and similarly an under-representation at the bottom end of the classification range. The achieved sample profile still broadly reflects that of the target population, although it is worth taking account of the slight bias towards those with better degree classifications (at the aggregate level).

Graduates who performed better academically might be expected to have fared better in the labour market and may be more likely to give a positive account of their course, and this is explored later in the report.

### Weighting

It was decided not to weight the data as our survey was a census of the eligible population. We approached all graduates in the target population, and so had no sample design, and in spite of the slight bias noted, the achieved sample was considered to be reasonably representative of the target population.

## 3.4 Comparison with HE creative arts and design and all subjects

We can explore representativeness further by comparing our responding graduates to the wider group of graduates studying creative arts and design subjects, and across all subjects (Table 3.2). This broader creative arts and design group includes subjects beyond those that are practice-based (the focus for our study) such as cinematics and imaginative writing, and performing arts subjects that were not included in the study.

However, it can be difficult to identify the most appropriate statistics as HESA captures data on a cohort by cohort basis, and they may not be presented in a format that allows for easy comparison. Focusing on one cohort only, 2003, and comparing the most appropriate data available on a few key measures, again indicates the female over-representation in our group of respondents when compared to the broader group of creative arts and design graduates. The table also indicates the over-representation of those who did well in their studies (at the top end of the classification range).

It is interesting to note that our respondent profile is more closely aligned to both the target survey population and to the wider creative arts and design population than to all graduates.



**Table 3.2: Comparing *Creative Graduates Creative Futures* respondents with the wider graduate population on key measures: 2003 cohort only**

	Creative Graduates Creative Futures (N)	Creative Graduates Creative Futures (%)	Creative arts & design (HESA) (N)	Creative arts & design (HESA) (%)	All subjects (HESA) (N)	All subjects (HESA) (%)
<b>Gender<sup>#</sup></b>						
Female	751	70.8	18,080	59.4	170,835	53.0
Male	309	29.2	12,345	40.6	151,775	47.0
<b>Location of institution<sup>#</sup></b>						
England	960	90.4	26,595	87.4	263,585	81.7
Wales	38	3.6	1,920	6.3	18,980	5.9
Scotland	64	6.0	1,480	4.9	32,045	9.9
Northern Ireland	0	0.0	430	1.4	7,995	2.5
UK	1,062	100.0	30,425	100.0	322,610	100.0
<b>Classification of degree~</b>						
First	192	18.1	2,740	10.6	25,795	10.3
Upper second	533	50.3	12,260	47.5	113,590	45.3
Lower second	274	25.9	8,490	32.9	78,985	31.5
Third/Pass/FdA	60	5.7	2,325	9.0	32,250	12.9

Note: <sup>#</sup> Gender and institution location HESA figures based on first year full-time first degree students in 2000/01 (majority graduating in 2003) - all domiciles

Note: ~ Degree classification HESA figures based on full-time first degree course qualifiers in 2002/03 - all domiciles

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures*, IES, 2010, Table App. Sample Table 2; *HESA Students in Higher Education Institutions 2000/01, 2002*; *HESA Students in Higher Education Institutions 2002/03, 2004*; Sample Table 2

## 3.5 Profile of respondents

In the course of the survey we collected information from our responding graduates about their backgrounds and study characteristics to understand their profile and distribution; to compare with the key characteristics provided by our partner institutions; and to enable us to explore the impact of background and study characteristics on experiences and outcomes.

### 3.5.1 Background characteristics

#### Gender and age

A large proportion (approximately three-quarters) of our responding graduates were female (73 per cent) and were under 30 (79 per cent).

Almost three-quarters of graduates (71 per cent) were in their mid-late 20s (age 26-29). To allow for more detailed exploration of the effect of age on experiences, the age distribution was broken down further into those in their early 20s (eight per cent), those aged 26 or 27 (44 per cent) and those in their late 20s (28 per cent). Just over one in ten (13

per cent) were in their 30s, and eight per cent were 40 or older at the time of the survey (see Table 3.3 and also Table App. F3.1).

### Disability and dyslexia

A significant minority (444: 13 per cent) reported a disability (see Table 3.3 and also Table App. F5.1), and for comparison it is interesting to note that this is considerably higher than for the average in all subjects, as outlined below.

For illustration, taking all 2000/01 full-time first degree registrations, first year only (ie those expecting to graduate in 2003) 4.9 per cent of women and 5.6 per cent of men registered a disability (5.2 per cent overall) with 2.3 per cent registering with dyslexia.<sup>1</sup>

By 2006/07 disability had risen to 7.7 per cent of women and 8.7 per cent of men (8.1 per cent overall) and those with dyslexia had doubled to 4.2 per cent<sup>2</sup>. The increase in students with dyslexia most probably represents improvements in awareness and diagnosis at secondary school or further education levels. The incidence of dyslexia most probably contributes to the increase in figures for disability overall.

Creative arts and design students are known to have high levels of dyslexia, and in our study 10 per cent (349) of the total respondents reported dyslexia. How representative is this of the creative arts and design population? A study by James (2003) based on HESA data of the total number of undergraduates registering in 2001 showed that creative arts and design had the largest percentage of dyslexic undergraduates (5.6 per cent) followed by combined studies and subjects allied to medicine. At the other end of the scale, students of maths, languages, medicine, veterinary science and law were recorded with less than one per cent with dyslexia.

As with the comparative data above on disability, HESA data is indicative only and does not take account of diagnosis after entry, or post graduation. It is worth bearing in mind that the high level of dyslexia in our respondents (ten per cent) is probably influenced by a willingness to disclose learning difficulties once studies were over, and/or diagnosis since first registering. In view of this, the high level of dyslexia in our respondents is probably representative.

### Ethnicity

A substantial group, more than one in ten (383 graduates: 11 per cent) were from a black and ethnic minority background, the largest of these minority groups being those from mixed backgrounds<sup>3</sup> (three per cent) and from Chinese backgrounds (three per cent). Very few graduates were from black backgrounds (see Table 3.3 and also Table App. F8.1).

<sup>1</sup> HESA (2002) *Students in HE Institutions*, Table 11a First Year UK Domiciled HE students 2000/1

<sup>2</sup> HESA (2007) *Students in HE Institutions*, Table 11a First Year UK Domiciled HE students 2006/7

<sup>3</sup> The categories used for ethnic background were taken from the 2001 Census (Level 1 groupings). Graduates were presented with the categories in the same order as the census categories. The mixed group in the census classification is described as White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, or any other mixed background.

### Family experience of HE

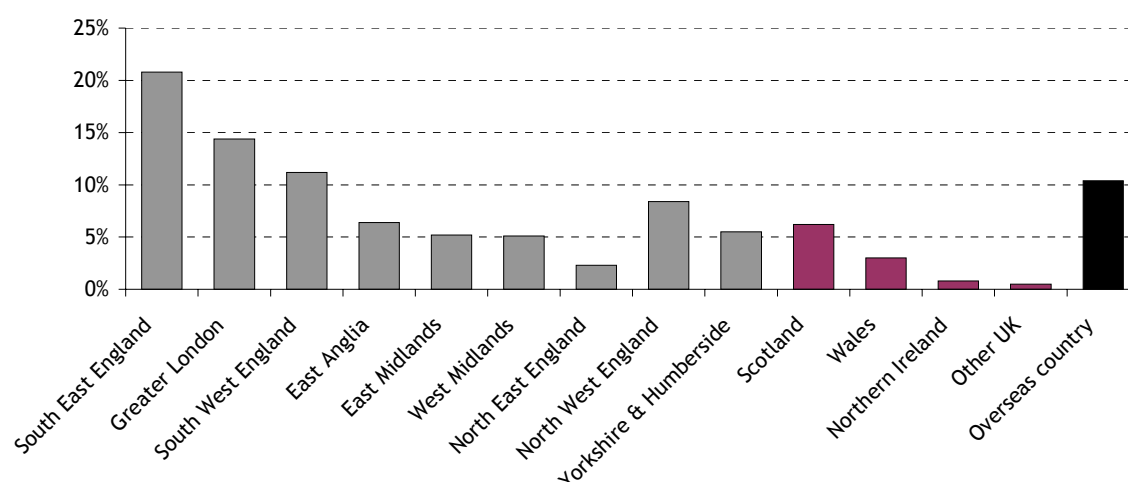
We determined socio-economic group by asking graduates to indicate whether their parents had experience of higher education. Just under half (46 per cent) had, revealing that for the majority they were the first generation in their families to undertake degree level study (see Table 3.3 and also Table App. F9.1).

### Student domicile status and location prior to study

The majority of graduates were from the UK (86 per cent) and international graduates represented 14 per cent of the respondents (eight per cent were from the wider EU and six per cent were from further overseas, see Table App. F2.1). A wide range of countries was represented.

It is worth noting here that just under one-third (32 per cent) of graduates from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were international students. Indeed over half (56 per cent) of international graduates were from black and minority ethnic backgrounds compared to only eight per cent of UK graduates and five per cent of EU graduates.

**Figure 3.3: Study characteristics - original location (prior to study)**



Base: all respondents (answering the question), N=3,407

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. F1.1*

Graduates of UK domicile also provided information about their location prior to their course by UK region or country (this may differ from their official student domicile status). Their location prior to study is shown in Figure 3.3. One in five graduates (21 per cent) came from the South East, 14 per cent from Greater London, and 11 per cent from the South West.

Graduates also provided information about their study location (see Section 3.5.2) and their location at the time of the survey. Their geographical movement over time is discussed in the context of graduates' career patterns in Chapter 7.

**Table 3.3: Sample breakdown - background characteristics**

		Frequency	%
<b>Gender</b>	Male	947	27.4
	Female	2,508	72.6
	Total (known)	3,455	100
	(Missing/unknown)	(23)	-
<b>Age</b> (mean=29.5)	Under 30	2,717	78.9
	- 25 or younger	268	7.8
	- 26/27	1,500	43.5
	- 28/29	949	27.5
	Aged 30-39	459	13.3
	40 and older	269	7.8
	Total (known)	3,445	100
	(Missing/unknown)	(33)	—
<b>Student domicile status</b>	Home	2,924	85.8
	EU	267	7.8
	Int'l	216	6.3
	Total (known)	3,407	100
	(Missing/unknown)	(71)	-
<b>Disability</b> (inc. dyslexia)	Not disabled	2,996	87.1
	Dyslexia	349	10.1
	Other disability/learning difficulty/ health or mental health difficulty	95	2.8
	Total	3,440	100
	(Missing/unknown)	(38)	—
<b>Ethnicity</b>	White	3,062	88.9
	BME	383	11.1
	- Mixed	109	3.2
	- Asian	95	2.8
	- Black	41	1.2
	- Chinese	111	3.2
	- Other	27	0.8
	Total (known)	3,445	100
	(Missing/unknown)	(33)	—
<b>Family experience of HE</b>	Parents	1,558	45.6
	Other family (not parent)	1,247	36.5
	None	609	17.8
	Total (known)	3,414	100
	(Missing/unknown)	(64)	—
<b>Base (N)</b>		<b>3,478</b>	<b>100</b>

Base: all respondents (answering the question), missing data or non-valid responses (eg don't know) indicated in brackets

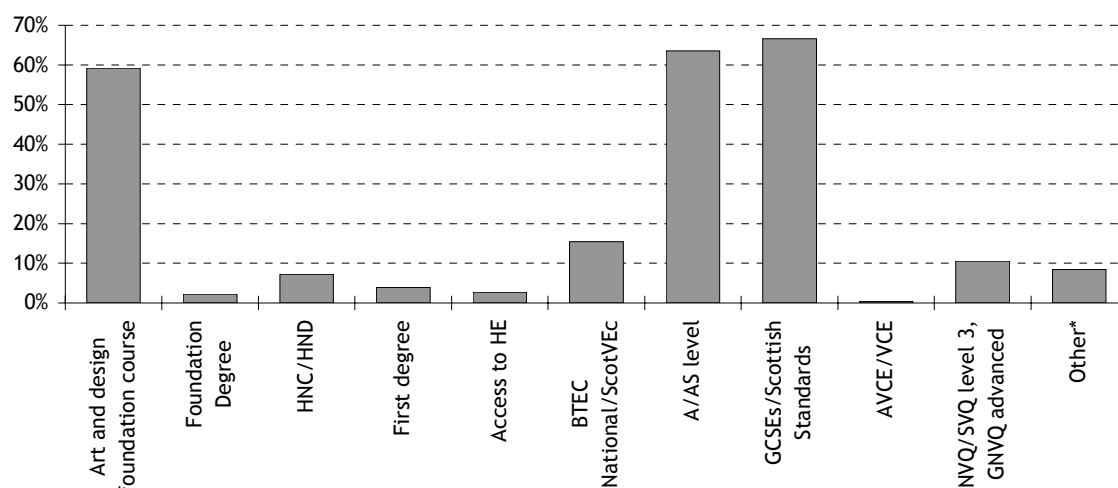
Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Tables App. F4.1, F3.1, F2.1, F5.1, F8.1, F9.1*

### 3.5.2 Study characteristics

#### Level and academic route

The great majority of respondents (95 per cent) were studying for a Bachelor of Arts qualification but other qualifications included BSc, BDes, and a small number had studied for a foundation degree (only 40, which accounts for one per cent, see Table App. A1.1).

**Figure 3.4: Study characteristics - prior qualifications**



Note: \* These other prior qualifications include: international qualification, prior degree level modules, prior postgraduate qualification, City and Guilds, GNVQ Intermediate.

Base: all respondents (answering the question), N=3,432

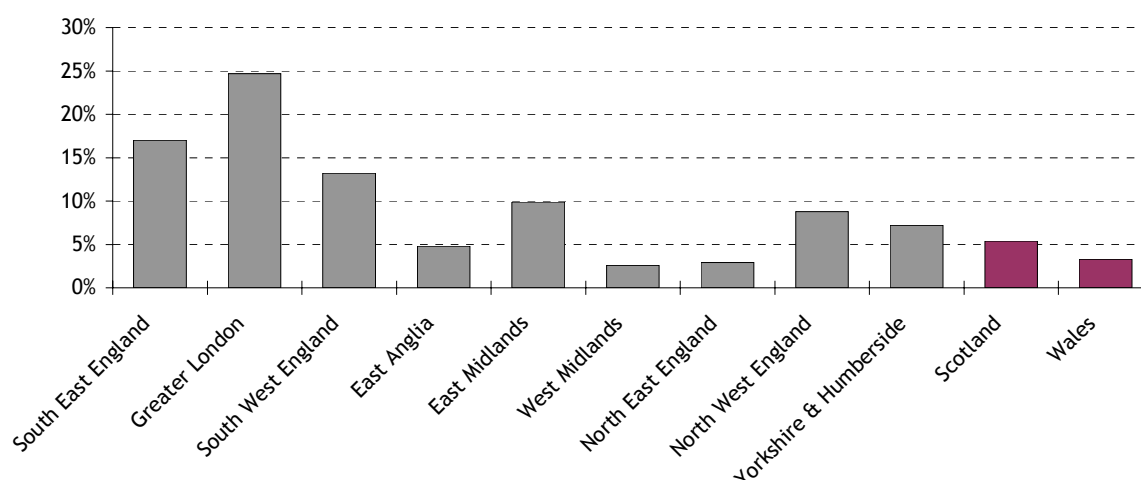
Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Table App. F7.1*

As Figure 3.4 shows, responses indicated that the academic route was the key pathway to these practice-based creative arts courses – two-thirds of respondents had GCSEs or Scottish Standards (67 per cent) and had A/AS level grades (64 per cent), and a similar proportion undertook an art and design foundation course prior to entry (59 per cent, see Table App. F7.1).

As noted above, we targeted those graduating in 2001/02, 2002/03 and 2003/04 academic years and almost all respondents completed their studies in these target years (93 per cent, see Table App. A5.1).

#### Type of institution

In terms of where respondents had studied, roughly equal numbers had attended a specialist arts institution (54 per cent) or a larger institution offering a wider range of courses (46 per cent, see Table App. A3.1).

**Figure 3.5: Study characteristics - study location**

Base: all respondents (answering the question), N=3,432

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Table App. F1.1*

Figure 3.5 shows that almost half the respondents had studied in London or the South East of England (42 per cent): with a quarter (25 per cent) in a London-based institution; and 17 per cent in the South East. A further 17 per cent studied in the North of England or in Scotland, 17 per cent in mid England (the Midlands or East Anglia) and 17 per cent in the South West or Wales (see Table App. F1.1).

### Degree success

Respondents tended to be successful in their studies, with more than two-thirds achieving either a first or upper second class degree (17 per cent and 51 per cent respectively). A further 27 per cent had gained a lower second class degree and six per cent had completed with a third or pass (see Table App. A6.1).

It is interesting to note that older graduates were more likely to be successful in their studies, indeed the likelihood of gaining a first class degree increased with age (22 per cent of those over 40, see Table App. A6.2).

Some EU graduates did particularly well and were over-represented in the group gaining a first class degree. However overseas students were less likely than others to gain a first class degree (12 per cent) and were considerably more likely than others to finish their studies with a third or pass mark (16 per cent, see Table App. A6.2).

Graduates with a disability were generally less successful in their studies. They were under-represented in the group with a first class degree, and those with a disability other than dyslexia were more likely than others to complete their studies with a third or pass mark (15 per cent, see Table App. A6.2).

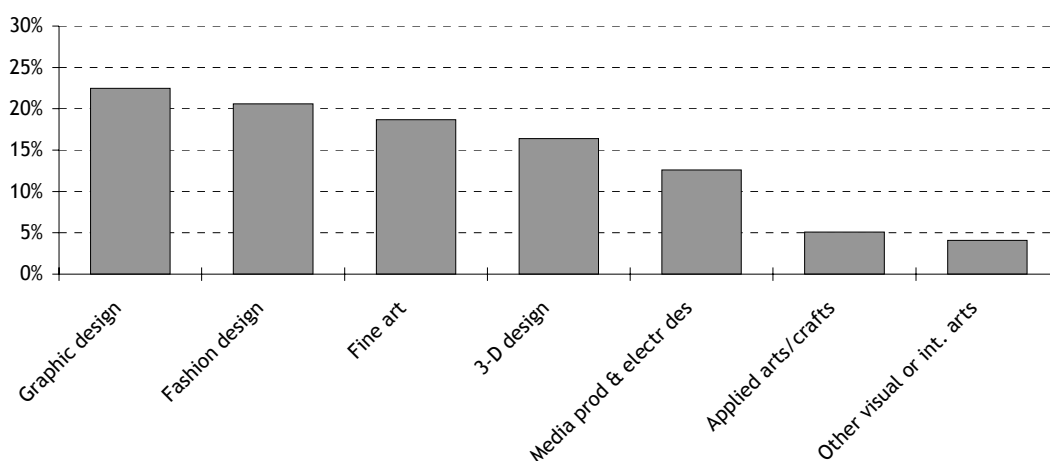
One of the most extreme differences noticed when looking at study success was found for black and minority ethnic graduates compared to graduates from white backgrounds.

White graduates were twice as likely to have gained a first class honours degree than those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (18 per cent compared to nine per cent) and conversely those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were almost three times more likely to have a third or pass mark than their white peers (14 per cent and five per cent respectively, see Table App. A6.2).

### Subject discipline

For ease of analysis and in line with the methodology established in D&R, subjects were grouped in broad areas or disciplines. A list of the subjects (which largely correspond to Joint Academic Coding System JACS subjects) is provided in Appendix 1: Eligible course titles, with groupings of subjects given in Appendix 2: Subject groups and disciplines.

**Figure 3.6: Study characteristics - subjects studied (CGCF)**



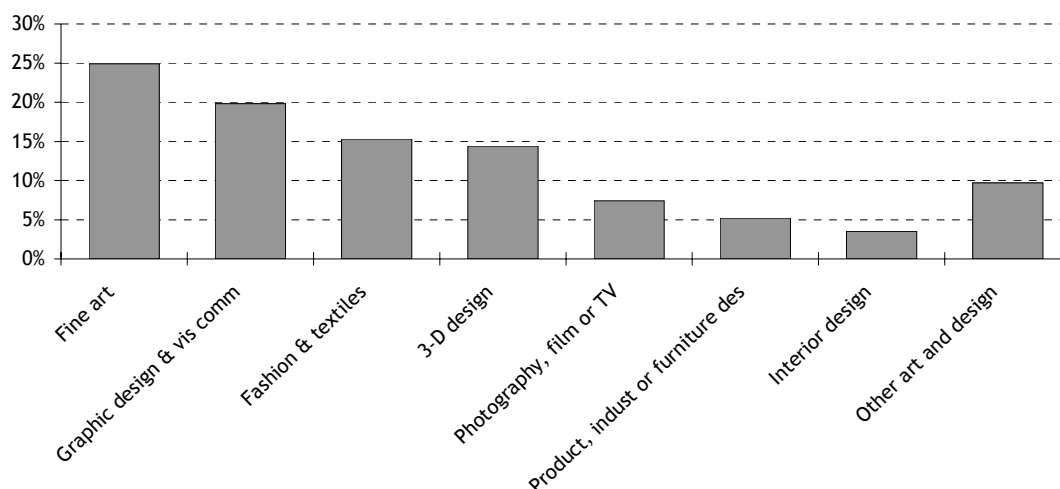
Base: all respondents (answering the question), N=3,478

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A2.1*

The most common subject areas, each accounting for one in five respondents, were: graphic design, visual communication and typography (referred to in the rest of the report as graphic design, 23 per cent); fashion and textiles design (21 per cent); and fine art (19 per cent).

This was followed by: 3-D design (16 per cent); media production and photography and interactive and electronic design (referred to in the rest of the report as media production and electronic design, 13 per cent); applied arts and crafts (five per cent); and other visual or interdisciplinary arts (four per cent) see Figure 3.6 and also Table App. A2.1).



**Figure 3.7: Study characteristics - subjects studied (D&R)**

*Source: Destinations and Reflections: Careers of British Art, Craft and Design Graduates, Blackwell and Harvey, CRQ, University of Central England in Birmingham, 1999, Table 2.2 (p8)*

D&R data shown for comparison indicates similar proportions across the subjects, with fine art as the largest group (see Figure 3.7). These figures are not directly comparable with our data, as the subjects are grouped differently. For example, in D&R crafts subjects tend to be included in 3-D design, and interior design was treated as a separate category.

### 3.5.3 Subject profiles

For our study, we explored further the profile of graduates within each of the key subject areas and point to some of the main differences between disciplines:

#### Profile of fine art graduates

Fine art, painting, sculpture, printmaking and fine art practice in all media:

- 652 in number, and the third largest group in the study.
- Three out of four fine art graduates were female (76 per cent).
- One-fifth (20 per cent) of fine artists were at least 40 and accounted for almost half of graduates in this age group across all respondents (47 per cent).
- One in ten (10 per cent) were from the wider EU or overseas.
- Fine artists were more likely to report a disability than on average (16 per cent); and one in eight (12 per cent) had dyslexia.
- Graduates from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were under-represented in this discipline (at only seven per cent).
- Fine art graduates were more likely to gain a mid-class degree (upper or lower second) than for graduates in other disciplines: 16 per cent achieved a first class degree and five per cent a third or pass.

See Tables App. A2.3 and A6.2.

### Profile of applied arts and crafts graduates

Applied arts and crafts including ceramics, glass, metal, wood, bookbinding, plastics and other materials:

- 179 in number, one of the smallest groups of respondents.
- The vast majority of applied arts and crafts graduates were women (89 per cent).
- Applied artists were more likely to be older than found across the whole group of responding graduates, with 16 per cent in their 30s and 12 per cent over 40.
- Ninety one per cent of graduates were of UK domicile, overseas students being most under-represented in this group at under two per cent.
- There is a higher representation of graduates with dyslexia amongst applied arts and crafts graduates (18 per cent).
- As with fine art courses, the vast majority of graduates were from white backgrounds (94 per cent) and correspondingly few individuals were from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, at under six per cent.
- It is interesting to note the relatively high proportion of graduates from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, accounting for one in five applied arts graduates (20 per cent).
- Graduates in this group were similar to fashion degree graduates in that they were the most likely to gain a first class degree but were also the most likely to gain a third or pass (21 per cent and eight per cent respectively).

See Tables App. A2.3 and A6.2

### Profile of 3-D design graduates

3-D design: product, industrial, furniture, theatre, interior design:

- 569 in number, these graduates represent the fourth largest group of respondents.
- One-third (34 per cent) of 3-D design graduates were male, and so men were better represented in this discipline than found across graduates as a whole.
- The vast majority of 3-D design graduates were in their 20s (81 per cent), with 15 per cent in their 30s and five per cent in their 40s or older.
- This group has a greater representation of EU and overseas graduates than found for graduates as a whole, with 18 per cent from outside of the UK (nine per cent EU and eight per cent wider overseas). It is interesting to note the more detailed geographical distribution of this group, as one-fifth of graduates were originally from the north of England and represented the largest proportion in the group.
- Just over one in ten (11 per cent) of graduates were disabled including nine per cent with dyslexia, which is marginally below the proportion found across all graduates.
- Twelve per cent of 3-D design graduates were from black and minority ethnic groups including three per cent from Asian backgrounds and five per cent from Chinese backgrounds.

- Sixteen per cent of graduates achieved a first class degree and six per cent graduated with a third or pass.

See Tables App. A2.3 and A6.2

### Profile of graphic design graduates

Graphic design, illustration, multi-media, visual communications:

- 783 in number, and the largest group of respondents.
- Similar to the group of 3-D design graduates, one-third of graphic design graduates were male (36 per cent) and so men were better represented here than in other disciplines.
- Very few graduates in this group were aged 40 or over (three per cent) and relatively few were in their 30s (12 per cent).
- Fifteen per cent were from outside of the UK including seven per cent from overseas. Looking at the more detailed geographical distribution, over a quarter (25 per cent) lived in the South East prior to commencing their studies which is greater than found across all graduates.
- This group were the least likely to have a disability, with eight per cent with dyslexia and under two per cent with another disability.
- Seventeen per cent achieved a first class degree and five per cent completed their studies with a third or pass (the latter being a lower proportion than across all graduates).

See Tables App. A2.3 and A6.2

### Profile of fashion design graduates

Fashion, textiles design, theatre wardrobe, fashion promotion and illustration:

- 715 in number, and the second largest group of respondents.
- Almost all graduates of fashion and textile design courses were female (94 per cent).
- There was a slightly higher than average proportion of younger graduates in this group (11 per cent were aged 25 or younger at the time of the survey) and this may reflect the greater proportion from the most recent cohort who responded. Correspondingly, relatively few were in their 30s (11 per cent) or in their 40s (four per cent).
- Eight per cent of graduates in this group were from overseas (neither classified as UK or EU students), which was the highest proportion found across the disciplines. This may somewhat account for the relatively high representation of graduates from black and minority ethnic backgrounds at 16 per cent, particularly those from Asian and from black backgrounds (four and two per cent respectively).
- Fourteen per cent of fashion design graduates reported a disability including 10 per cent with dyslexia.

- Graduates in this group were similar to applied arts and design graduates in that they were the most likely to gain a first class degree but were also the most likely to gain a third or pass (20 per cent and 8 per cent respectively).

See Tables App. A2.3 and A6.2

### Profile of media production and electronic design graduates

Media production, photography, interactive and electronic design:

- 437 in number and the fifth largest group of respondents.
- There was an almost even split between male and female graduates in this discipline (48 and 53 per cent respectively).
- The age profile generally reflected that found across graduates as a whole, with 80 per cent in their 20s, 15 per cent in their 30s and six per cent in their 40s.
- This group had a relatively higher proportion of EU students (ten per cent) than in other subjects.
- Fourteen per cent reported having a disability, including 11 per cent with dyslexia which closely mirrors the pattern found across all graduates.
- Ninety per cent of media production and electronic design graduates were from white backgrounds, and again this closely mirrors the overall pattern for graduates.
- Fourteen per cent of graduates gained a first class degree (which is lower than found in any other discipline) and six per cent completed their studies with a third or pass.

See Tables App. A2.3 and A6.2

### Profile of other visual and interdisciplinary arts graduates

Other visual and interdisciplinary arts: including writing, journalism, advertising, cultural studies and some performing arts:

- 143 in number and the smallest group of respondents.
- Men were slightly better represented in this group than on average, representing approximately one-third (33 per cent).
- Younger graduates were also better represented in this group than on average, with 13 per cent 25 or younger, however older graduates were also better represented with 11 per cent in their 40s or older. This probably reflects the wide range of subjects captured in this grouping.
- Thirteen per cent of graduates were from outside of the UK which closely corresponds to the pattern across all graduates. However, when looking at geographical distribution within the UK a large proportion of graduates were originally from the South West prior to their studies (30 per cent). This is likely to represent the inclusion of a wider group of subjects into the eligibility criteria for one partner institution that is based in this region which specialises in inter-disciplinary creative arts degree courses. In contrast, very few graduates in this group were originally from either Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

- Disabled graduates are under-represented in this group with nine per cent reporting a disability (including seven per cent with dyslexia).
- Graduates from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were also less well represented here than found on average, at seven per cent.
- Graduates in this group were the least likely to gain a first class degree (14 per cent) and were more likely than found across graduates as a whole to finish their studies with a third or pass mark (eight per cent).
- Due to the relative size and heterogeneous nature of this group (covering a broad range of subjects and characteristics), the findings relating to this group are not always fully described.

See Tables App. A2.3 and A6.2

**Table 3.4: Sample breakdown - educational characteristics**

		Frequency	%
<b>Prior qualification<sup>#</sup></b>	Art and design foundation course	2,033	59.2
	Foundation Degree	76	2.2
	HNC/HND	246	7.2
	First degree	134	3.9
	Access to HE	93	2.7
	BTEC National/ScotVEC	530	15.4
	A/AS level	2,180	63.5
	GCSEs/Scottish Standards	2,287	66.6
	AVCE/VCE	15	0.4
	NVQ/SVQ level 3, GNVQ advanced	361	10.5
	Other <sup>6</sup>	288	8.4
	<i>Total (known)</i>	<i>3,432</i>	<i>100</i>
	<i>(Missing/unknown)</i>	<i>(46)</i>	<i>—</i>
<b>Qualification</b>	BA	3,290	94.6
	BSc	66	1.9
	FdA	40	1.2
	BDes	58	1.7
	Other (eg MA, MDes, PGDip, and BA/BSc joint <sup>7</sup> )	22	1.0
	<i>Total (known)</i>	<i>3,476</i>	<i>100</i>
	<i>(Missing/unknown)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>—</i>

<sup>6</sup> These other prior qualifications include: international qualification, prior degree level modules, prior postgraduate qualification, City and Guilds, GNVQ Intermediate.

<sup>7</sup> Of the postgraduate courses reported four were from Scottish institutions where the term masters may apply to four year undergraduate courses. Although, the majority of remaining cases reported postgraduate level courses, it is assumed that they had previously completed an undergraduate degree at an eligible institution (ten of these had returned paper responses).

		Frequency	%
<b>Subject area</b>	Fine art	652	18.7
	Applied arts/crafts	179	5.1
	3-D design	569	16.4
	Graphic design, visual comm and typography	783	22.5
	Fashion design	715	20.6
	Media production and photography, and interactive and electronic design	437	12.6
	- Interactive and electronic design	43	1.2
	- Media production and photography	394	11.3
	Other visual or interdisciplinary arts, writing/journalism/advertising/cultural studies	143	4.1
	<i>Total</i>	3,478	100
	<i>(Missing/unknown)</i>	<i>(0)</i>	—
<b>Completed studies</b>	Prior to 2002	71	2.0
	2002	839	24.5
	2003	1,062	31.0
	2004	1,285	37.5
	After 2004	167	4.9
	<i>Total (known)</i>	3,424	100
	<i>(Missing/unknown)</i>	<i>(54)</i>	—
<b>Classification</b>	First	590	17.0
	Upper second	1,750	50.3
	Lower second	918	26.5
	Third/Pass (incl. Pass FdA)/other	206	5.9
	Other	25	0.7
	<i>Total (known)</i>	3,464	100
	<i>(Missing/unknown)</i>	<i>(14)</i>	—
<b>Type of institution</b>	Specialist	1,866	53.7
	Generalist	1,610	46.3
	<i>Total</i>	3,476	100
	<i>(Missing/unknown)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	—
<i>Base (N)</i>		3,478	

Note: # multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Base: all respondents (answering the question), missing data or non-valid responses (eg don't know) indicated in brackets

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010*

### 3.6 Summary

- *Creative Graduates Creative Futures* (CGCF) achieves a representative sample for the creative HE sector in terms of the number of institutions, starting sample and response rate.
- 26,806 graduates from 26 UK higher education institutions were invited to take part in the survey, drawn from 2002, 2003 and 2004 cohorts of full-time first degree and foundation degrees in art, design, crafts and media practice subjects.
- The survey achieved a response rate of 14 per cent (3,478 eligible questionnaires) and the profile of responding graduates broadly corresponded to the profile of graduates in practice-based arts, crafts, design and media courses across the partner institutions.
- The subject profile broadly compares with D&R and the size of our survey is nearly double that of D&R in terms of institutions taking part and in the number of respondents.
- Over three-quarters of graduates were women and a similar proportion were under 30 years old at the time of the survey.
- The majority of graduates were of UK domicile (86 per cent) prior to their degree study, with just under half of respondents (42 per cent) from London and south-east England.
- There were significant numbers of graduates from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (383 in number) and from outside the UK (267 EU and 216 overseas) to allow for analysis of the experiences of these groups.
- Disabled graduates (including dyslexia) were well represented and considerably higher in proportion (at 13 per cent) than indicated by higher education statistics for the sector.
- The majority of graduates were the first generation in the immediate family to enter higher education at 54 per cent.
- The great majority of graduates had studied for a Bachelor of Arts qualification and had taken an academic route to HE – gaining GCSEs, A/AS levels and/or had participated in an art and design foundation course.
- Graduates tended to be academically successful, with over two-thirds completing their undergraduate studies with a first or upper second class degree. Overseas (non UK and non EU graduates) were notably less academically successful than other graduates.
- Disabled graduates and those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were also considerably less likely to have been academically successful. White graduates were twice as likely to have gained a first class honours degree than those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (18 per cent compared to nine per cent).



- The most common subject areas were: graphic design, fashion and textiles design and fine art; fewer graduates had studied 3-D design, media production and electronic design, applied arts and crafts; or other subjects (grouped together as other visual or interdisciplinary arts).
- The profile of graduates in each of the disciplines varied, often quite distinctly, although, to a certain extent, graduates of 3-D design and graphic design had similar profiles, as did graduates of fine art and applied arts and design.

## 4 The creative curriculum and work experience

This chapter:

- reviews the distinctive features and benefits of a creative education
- explores graduates' experiences of their undergraduate courses
- focuses on the extent and impact of work placements, both those that are a required element of courses and those extra to but related to courses
- examines wider work experience gained through undertaking paid work whilst studying
- presents data about graduates' participation in wider course elements and their views on the relevance to career development
- reviews support provided to individuals after they graduate, to see what opportunities graduates are aware of and have access to.

### 4.1 Learning through creative practice in higher education

It is widely acknowledged that the benefits of a creative education are potentially much broader than providing for the needs of a successful economy:

*'The outcomes of the study and practice of art and design in higher education contribute to both the cultural development and the economic well-being of the individual and of society.'*

QAA, 2008, p.4

However, the nature of the educational experience itself is less well understood. What is distinctive about a creative higher education is that creative practice is at the core and provides the context for learning in relation to academic, employment and professional development outcomes.

A creative education is concerned with conceiving, producing, promoting and disseminating the material outcomes that constitute our visual culture, and at the same time encourages attributes that are required in the modern workplace:

*‘Learning in art and design develops both an aesthetic sensibility and the capacity to be creative. The material outcomes of engagement with these characteristics are equally varied in art and in design, but both require the development of particular cognitive attributes. The role of imagination in the creative process is essential in developing the capacities to observe and visualise, in the identifying and solving of problems, and in the making of critical and reflective judgements.’*

QAA, 2008, p.3

The regular contribution of industry professionals and teacher-practitioners to this process gives added value, providing a professional or commercial context for creative activity.

At the same time, the bespoke nature of this education allows students to make choices in relation to learning activities, the pursuit of ideas relating to personal interests, and to experience a range of learning and teaching methods that encourage individuality, entrepreneurial behaviour and independent thought. Students are making a crucial vocational choice when they enter creative higher education. These individuals may feel more comfortable learning through creative practice – learning by doing – than in the mainstream academic domain, and may have a preference for visual learning.

### Active learning through project work

Experiential learning is the dominant pedagogic model in art, craft, design and media education, with the project as the main vehicle for learning, enabling students to engage with high-level intellectual learning, using creativity and imagination and the application of skill to conceive and solve problems:

*‘Active learning through project-based enquiry has always been a feature of the art and design curriculum in higher education. Through this approach students have been encouraged to develop both the capacity for independent learning and the ability to work with others. Students not only develop the ability to solve set problems in a creative way, but they also develop the ability to identify and to redefine problems, and to raise and address appropriate issues.’*

QAA, ibid.

### Transfer of the creative process

Opportunities to apply creativity in different settings naturally occur within the curriculum as students engage with a variety of project work, industry-linked initiatives, placements, collaborations, exhibitions and competitions.

Work-related learning is, to an extent, experienced through formalised work placements in industry (for those courses able to provide them): 42 per cent of CGCF respondents had undertaken placements of some kind on their courses. Almost a quarter (24 per cent) experienced a placement that was embedded into their course (as a course requirement) but 20 per cent of graduates were proactive in organising their own work-related opportunities outside the curriculum. At the same time, the majority of students were already in the workplace, with 64 per cent of graduates undertaking term-time and/or vacation work.

At the same time, most graduates experienced a mixed economy of learning and teaching models on their courses that simulated real-life working. More than 80 per cent of CGCF graduates had participated in shows/exhibitions, peer and self-evaluation, teamwork and rated most course activities fairly or very useful, with Personal and Professional Development (PPD), teamwork and teaching by practitioners perceived to be the most useful in relation to their careers.

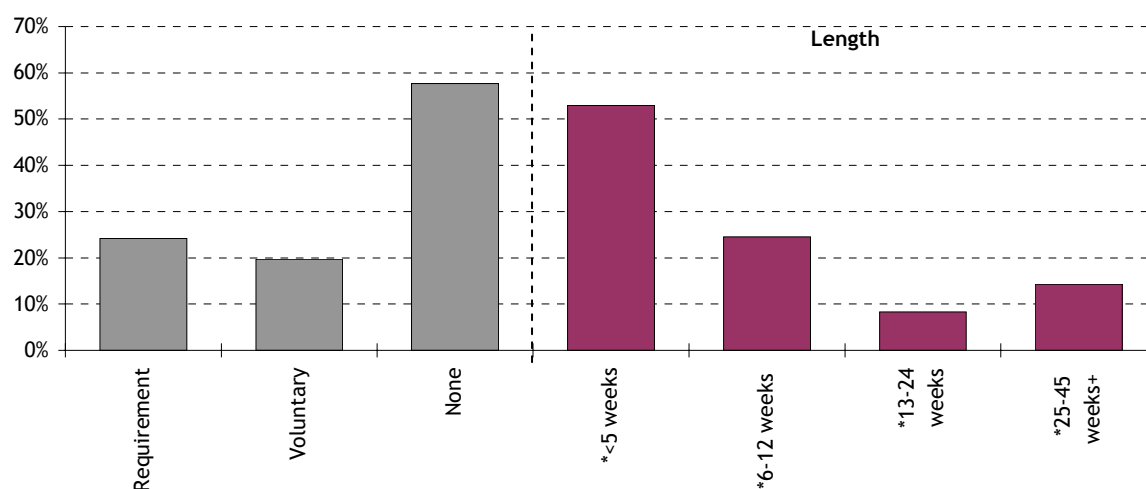
This chapter explores the extent to which graduates value their courses and how well their creative education prepared them for the workplace.

We focus first on work placements as a course requirement and additional course-related placements, followed by examining wider-experience undertaken during term-time and in the vacations. This is followed by an examination of course experiences and support accessed after graduation.

## 4.2 What is the extent of formal work placement activity?

The term 'work placement' refers to a specific organised period of time spent within the workplace or industrial setting, particularly periods that are required as part of a course of study. Work experience is used as a more generalised term and may include placement, but also any casual term-time work and vacation job. Work placement affords the most effective experience of professional practice and a route into eventual employment. This is borne out by many graduates who experienced work placement and who, on the whole, were extremely positive about their experience.

Focusing specifically on work placements during studies, 42 per cent of respondents (29 per cent D&R) had taken part in course-related work placements during their studies, and for over half of these (57 per cent) it was a course requirement (compared with 42 per cent D&R), demonstrating a marked improvement in provision, in spite of the growth in student numbers and finite resources. However, in an industry dominated by micro-businesses with limited capacity for taking on students, these opportunities are unlikely to increase.

**Figure 4.1: Nature and extent of placements<sup>#</sup>**

Note: <sup>#</sup> multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses N=3,384; \*those reporting placements N=1,434

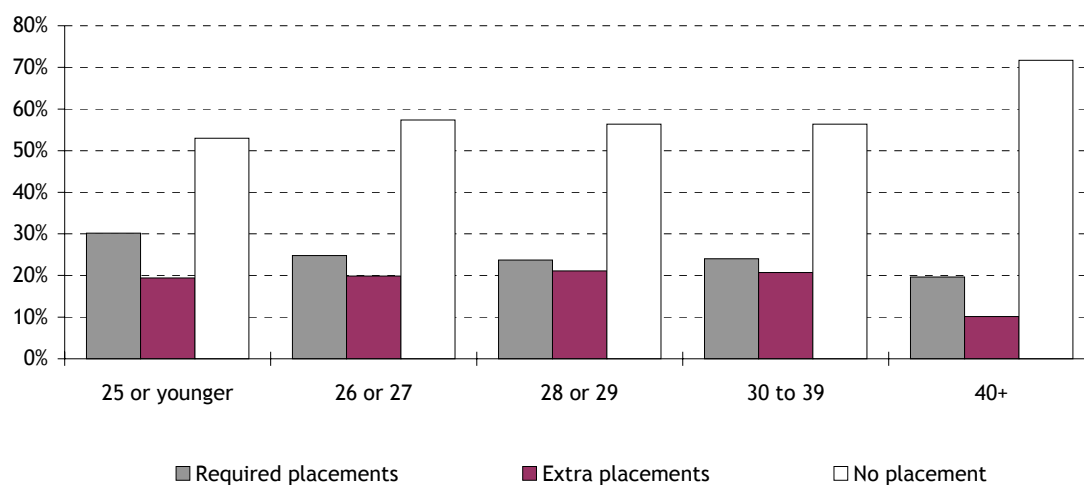
Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A7.1*

Placements tended to be relatively short, with 77 per cent having in total up to 12 weeks placement experience. However, roughly one in five (19 per cent) of those undertaking work placements as a course requirement (14 per cent of all types of placements see Figure 4.1) had placements totalling at least six months (a placement lasting 25 weeks or more, see Table App. A7.3). In the main, respondents only had one related work placement during their course (59 per cent) but multiple placements were not uncommon particularly those undertaken outside of course requirements (see Table App. A7.2).

### Differences by background characteristics

**Gender and age:** Women were more likely than men to have had a placement (45 per cent compared to 36 per cent), but this may well reflect subject differences – as almost all graduates from fashion design courses are women and, as noted below, these courses have the most placement activity (see Table App. A7.6).

Younger graduates were relatively more likely than their older peers to have placement experience. They were almost twice as likely to have had a placement than those aged 40 or older (47 per cent compared to 28 per cent) who undertook noticeably fewer placements outside course requirements. This may perhaps be a reflection of older students' greater labour market experience prior to joining their courses – they may not feel the need to gain additional work experience (Figure 4.2).

**Figure 4.2: Placement activity by age group<sup>#</sup>**

Note: <sup>#</sup> multiple response questions, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses, N=3,412

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A7.6*

**Parental experience of HE:** Respondents whose parents had been to university were more likely to have had a placement (44 per cent compared to 39 per cent of those whose parents had not been to university), perhaps suggesting that these individuals are better able to take advantage of these opportunities which may be unpaid (see Table App. A7.6).

**Domicile:** Graduates from the EU were relatively more likely to have had a placement during their course than home students (50 per cent compared to 41 per cent) – both embedded in the course and those extra to course requirements (see Table App. A7.6).

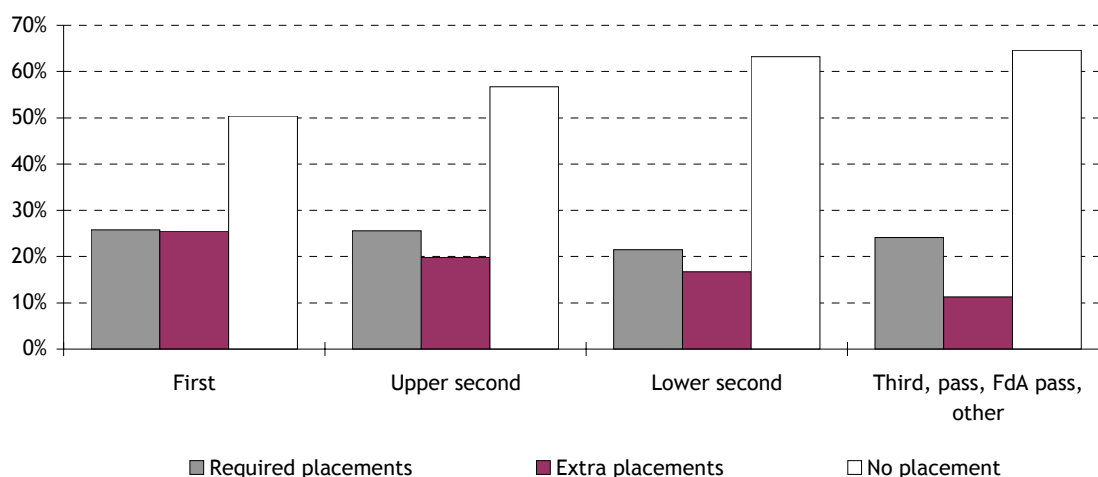
**Disability/dyslexia:** Graduates with disabilities (other than dyslexia) were marginally more likely to have had a work placement as a requirement of their course than graduates with no disabilities (30 per cent compared to 24 per cent), and they were less likely to have had additional placements (16 per cent compared to 19 per cent). This may suggest that this group of graduates may be given more formal support than others to set up and access placement opportunities (see Table App. A7.6).

### Differences by study characteristics

**Year of graduation:** Exploring placement activity by study characteristics shows that more recent graduates had relatively more placement activity as part of their course than those who graduated in 2002 (22 per cent, compared with 25 per cent in 2003 and 2004). This may indicate an increase in placement activity over recent times, and graduates in this study had greater access to placements than in D&R, as mentioned earlier. However, in the current economic climate, this level of placements may be difficult to sustain (see Table App. A7.7).

**Degree classification:** Those gaining a first or upper second class degree were more likely to undertake placements during their studies. The reasons for this are unclear, but placement activity is linked to success in degree studies. It would, therefore, be interesting to explore this interaction further (see Figure 4.3 and also Table App. A7.7).

**Figure 4.3: Placement activity by classification of degree<sup>#</sup>**



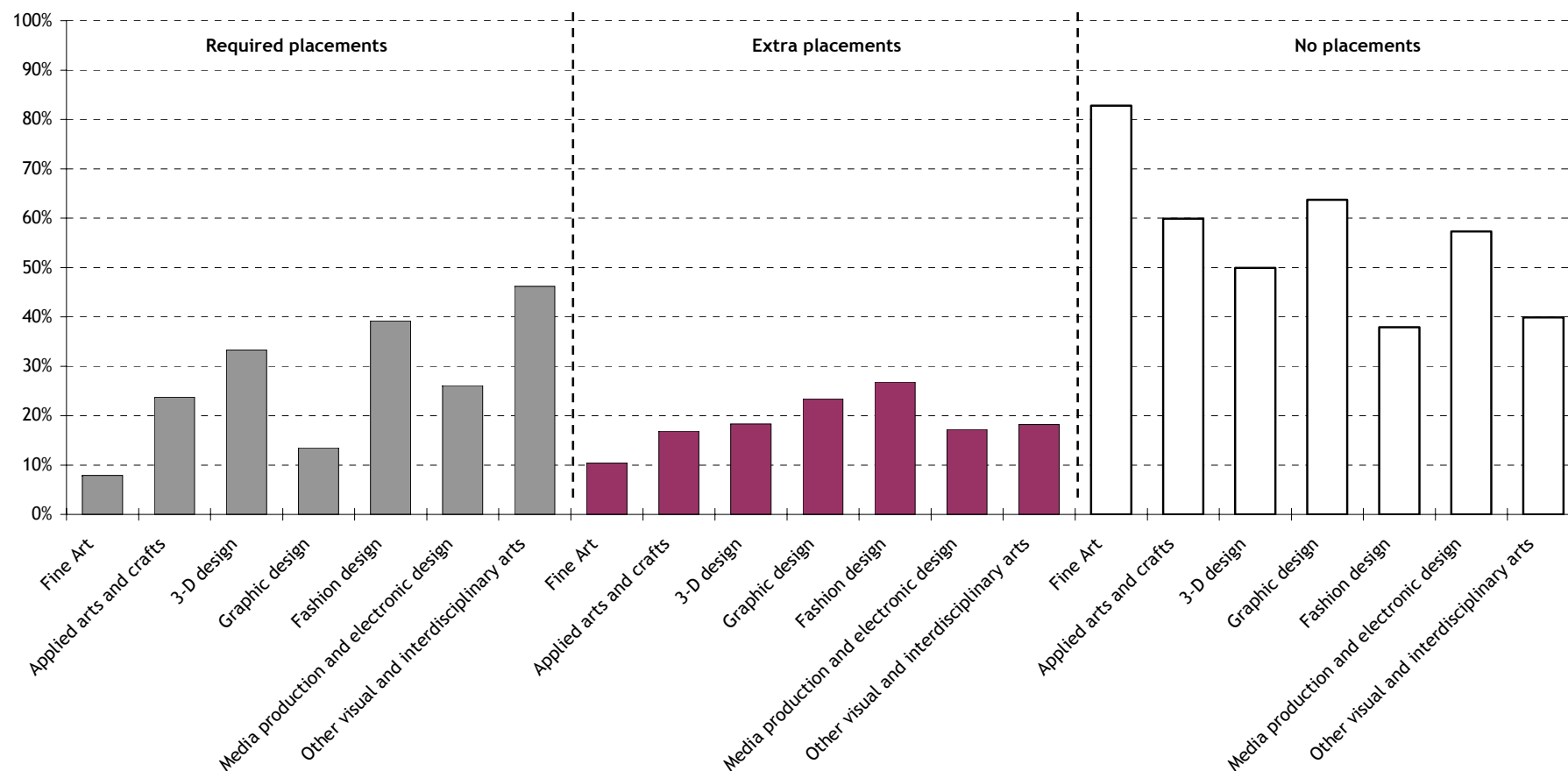
Note: <sup>#</sup> Multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses, N=3,430

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A7.7*

**Subject discipline:** Placement activity varied significantly by discipline. Graduates from fashion design (62 per cent), 3-D design (50 per cent) and other visual and interdisciplinary arts courses (60 per cent) were much more likely to have had work placement, particularly when compared to those from fine art courses where only 17 per cent reported a placement, and only eight per cent had a placement that was a required element of their course (see Figure 4.4 and also Table App. A7.7). Also placements in 3-D design and fashion design courses tended to be longer than found on other courses, at least six weeks in total (see Table App. A7.9).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Longer placements were also found on applied arts and crafts courses but the numbers involved are small (N=41) and so this finding should be treated with caution.

**Figure 4.4: Placement activity by subject area of degree<sup>#</sup>**

Note: <sup>#</sup> multiple response questions, therefore sum % greater than 100%. Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses, N=3,441

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures*, IES, 2010; Table App. A7.7



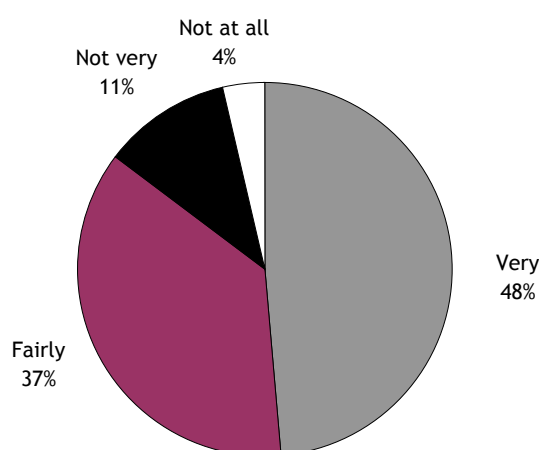
### Differences by work characteristics

**Graduates in creative occupations:** Graduates currently working in creative occupations and in creative industries were more likely to have experienced work placements, particularly those additional (extra) to their course. Graduates in creative work were almost twice as likely as those working in other roles or sectors to have had these extra placements (24 per cent compared to 14 per cent) (see Table App. A7.8).

#### 4.2.1 How useful are course-related work placements?

Graduates were asked how useful their placement experiences were to the development of their careers. The vast majority (85 per cent) of those undertaking a placement felt they were very or fairly useful (Figure 4.5).

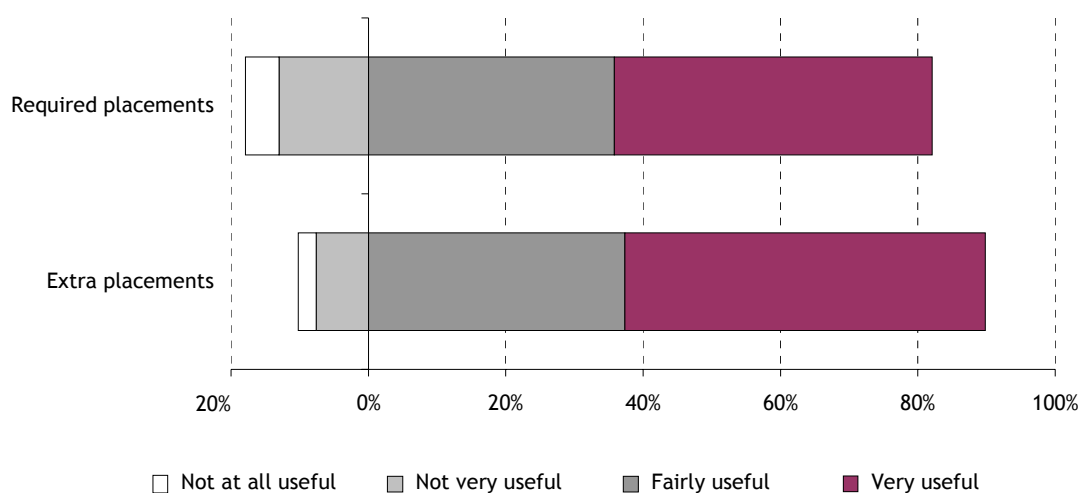
**Figure 4.5: Usefulness of placements**



Base: All respondents reporting placements during undergraduate studies, N=1,434

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A7.1*

Placements that were not a course requirement were considered to be relatively more useful than those that were, with 90 per cent of respondents rating them as very or fairly useful compared to 82 per cent for required placements (Figure 4.6). It may be that where graduates have organised their own placements they are more closely aligned with their immediate interests.

**Figure 4.6: Perceived usefulness of work placement by type of placement**

Base: All those undertaking work placements during undergraduate studies, N=1,434

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A7.4*

Longer placements were perceived to be more useful with three-quarters (74 per cent) of those who had undertaken placements lasting at least six months (25 weeks plus) rating these placements as very useful compared to only 37 per cent of those who had very short placements (five weeks or less) (see Table App. A7.5).

### Differences by background and study characteristics

Generally, older graduates were most positive than younger graduates about placements (although, as noted above, they were less likely to have had one). Graduates with disabilities (other than dyslexia) were also relatively more likely to rate placements highly. (Table App. A7.6).

Graduates with first class degrees were more likely than others to find placements useful to their career development, although this group were generally more positive about their higher education experiences as a whole, as were graduates from applied arts and crafts courses. The small number of graduates from fine art courses who had placement experience tended to rate this lower than graduates from other courses (although still generally useful), as did graduates from other visual and interdisciplinary courses (Table App. A7.7).

#### 4.2.2 What do graduates say about course-related work placements?

Graduates were asked to add further feedback about their courses and many commented on work placements. On the whole, they were extremely positive about the opportunities they had for work placements and described these as 'vital' and 'essential' for gaining paid work after their degree. This finding is corroborated by the high usefulness scores for course-related work placements noted above. Many felt that placements gave an insight

into real working practices and provided them with key contacts for employment after they graduated:

*'The work experience was the most important thing, and I think there should be as much of that as possible and as early on as possible to try and get students in to companies.'*

The majority of graduates who talked about work placements suggested they should be mandatory for all courses, and that tutors should place greater importance on placement activity. Graduates who had been on short placements thought that they should be longer (which again ties in with the relatively higher perceived usefulness of longer placements), and those without any placement experience wished that they had:

*'I think it is really important to undertake work experience while studying. I didn't do this and regret it to this day as I cannot afford to do it now with rent and bills to pay etc. I think work experience should be strongly encouraged by the institution.'*

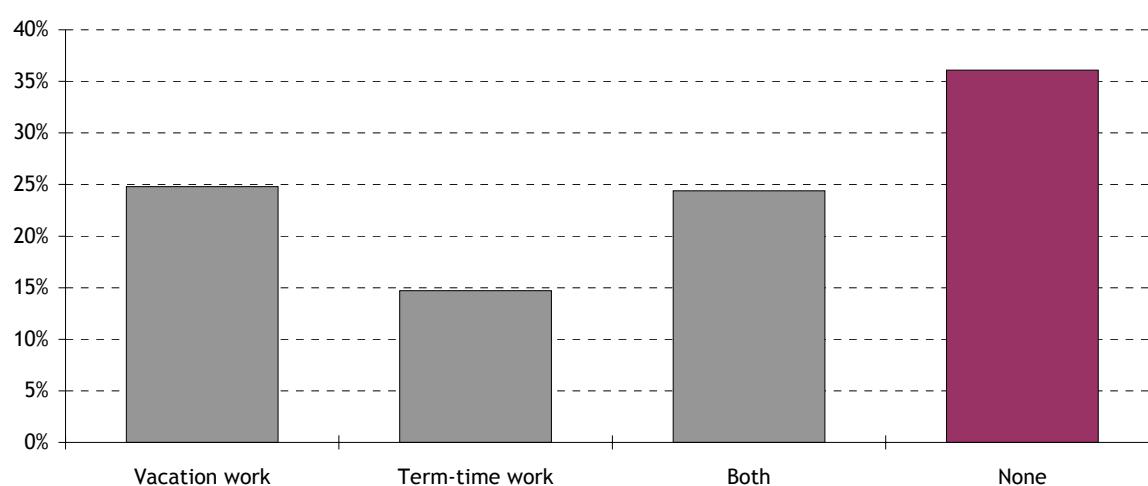
This feeling corresponds closely to comments about barriers to career progression outlined later in this report (Chapter 9) where graduates felt they lacked experience but could not afford to take low or unpaid work experience to help them with their careers.

Few respondents were critical about their work placements, and in these cases, criticisms centred on support for arranging the placements.

### 4.3 What is the extent of wider work experience?

Two-thirds of graduates (64 per cent) had worked during term-time or vacations, and a corresponding 36 per cent had not worked at all (Figure 4.7). In general, working during vacations was more common (49 per cent) but a sizeable group (30 per cent) worked during term-time (calculated from Table App. A8.1)

**Figure 4.7: Extent of wider work experience (working whilst studying)**

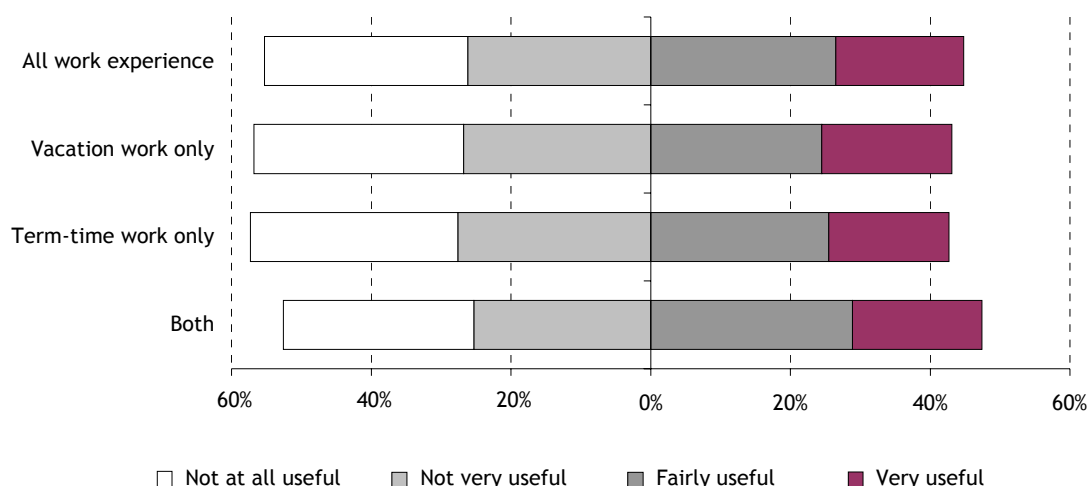


Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses, N=3,314

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures*, IES, 2010, Table App. A8.1

Forty-five per cent considered this work experience useful to their career development, including 18 per cent who felt this was very useful (Figure 4.8). In general, formal work placements rather than informal work experience were considered more beneficial for career development (see Tables App. A8.1 and A7.1), with 85 per cent of graduates rating course-related placements as useful (including 48 per cent very useful). It is interesting to note that a combination of term-time work and vacation work was considered most useful (rather than vacation or term-time working alone).

**Figure 4.8: Perceived usefulness of wider work experience by type of experience**



Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses reporting wider work experience, N=2,104

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A8.2*

## 4.4 What course activities do graduates value?

In addition to work placements, fourteen aspects of the creative curriculum were identified as specifically core to creative practice and contributing to preparing students for work. Respondents to the survey were asked whether their courses had involved these elements, and how useful they had found them (or would have found them) for their careers.

### 4.4.1 Participation in course activities

Respondents reported high levels of exposure to these course activities (Figure 4.9). However there were differences in the experiences of graduates across the subject disciplines (which are discussed below, see also Table App. A12/13.2). Over time, by cohort, proportions experiencing course activities increased, in particular for Personal and Professional Development (PPD), collaboration with others, business/enterprise and peer/self evaluation (see Table App. A12/13.4). This could indicate progressive improvements to courses, but the pattern may also be driven by an increasing awareness of these activities (rather than any changes to provision). Contextual/critical studies and field trips and study visits were in decline, and we may speculate that the latter may be for financial and resource reasons.

**Figure 4.9: Proportion experiencing named course activities (%)**

Shows and exhibitions	93.4
Peer/self-evaluation	89.1
Teamwork	86.2
Contextual/critical studies	86.0
Teaching by practitioners	84.2
Personal and Professional Development (PPD)	74.2
Field trips and study visits	73.7
Competitions	58.0
External/live project work	53.8
Careers education and guidance	46.5
Collaboration with students on other courses	43.4
Business/enterprise activities	27.5
Exchange/international experience	25.9
Volunteering	18.3

Note: % experienced course activity:  70%  30-70%  <30%

Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses, N=3,427

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A12/13.2*

### Course activities experienced by more than 70 per cent of graduates

Five course activities were widely experienced across all courses and can be regarded as characteristic of the sector as a whole with more than four out of five graduates experiencing shows and exhibitions (93 per cent), peer/self evaluation (89 per cent), team-working (86 per cent), contextual/critical studies (86 per cent) and teaching by practitioners (84 per cent). Teamwork was experienced most by media production and electronic design and also graphic design graduates (94 and 91 per cent respectively). Teaching by practitioners was widely recognised with participation rates of between 78 per cent for media production and 90 per cent in applied arts and crafts. Fine art courses were considerably more likely (94 per cent) to involve contextual or critical studies, particularly compared to media production and electronic design (81 per cent) and other visual and interdisciplinary arts (72 per cent).

Personal and Professional Development (PPD) was also prevalent in creative education, with 74 per cent of graduates reporting that their course involved this activity, and it was evenly represented across all subjects (70 to 78 per cent). As a relatively recent curriculum element, PPD appears to be both widely recognised and highly valued (see below). Field trips and study visits (74 per cent) were also widely experienced, particularly in applied arts and crafts (83 per cent) and 3D design (81 per cent) but considerably fewer media production and electronic design graduates had this opportunity (59 per cent).

### Course activities experienced by 30-60 per cent of graduates

Around half of the respondents had participated in competitions (58 per cent), external and live projects (54 per cent), careers education and guidance (47 per cent), and collaboration with students on other courses (43 per cent).

Competitions had an understandably wide variation by subject and were extensively reported by graphic design graduates (76 per cent) and fashion design graduates (70 per cent), in contrast with just over one third of fine art courses (39 per cent) and other visual and interdisciplinary arts courses (30 per cent). There was less variation found for external/live project work by subject. However, design graduates (3-D, graphic and fashion design) were more likely than others to report these activities (60, 59 and 53 per cent respectively).

Collaboration with students on other courses was clearly distinguished from teamwork, which was experienced by the majority of graduates. Collaboration appeared to have an interdisciplinary context and had the lowest exposure in the applied arts and crafts (32 per cent) and 3D Design (38 per cent) and the highest in the interdisciplinary areas of media production and electronic design (50 per cent) and other visual and interdisciplinary arts (51 per cent).

Experience of careers education and guidance during their degree course was reported by just under half the graduates, and those from fashion design (56 per cent) and other visual and interdisciplinary courses (52 per cent) were the most likely to do so. It was lowest for graduates of fine art and media production and electronic design (40 and 41 per cent respectively). A number of factors may influence this pattern for careers education and guidance, including: its visibility; its centrality to the course (eg a structured timetabled element or an option delivered outside of the course); and the perceived need for guidance given the vocational nature of courses. It is interesting to note the level and variation in perceived exposure to careers education and guidance during studies in the context of the increased emphasis on preparation for work and employability within the academic domain across all HE institutions and the move towards curriculum models that embed careers education and awareness (discussed in Chapter 5).

### Course activities experienced by fewer than 30 per cent of graduates

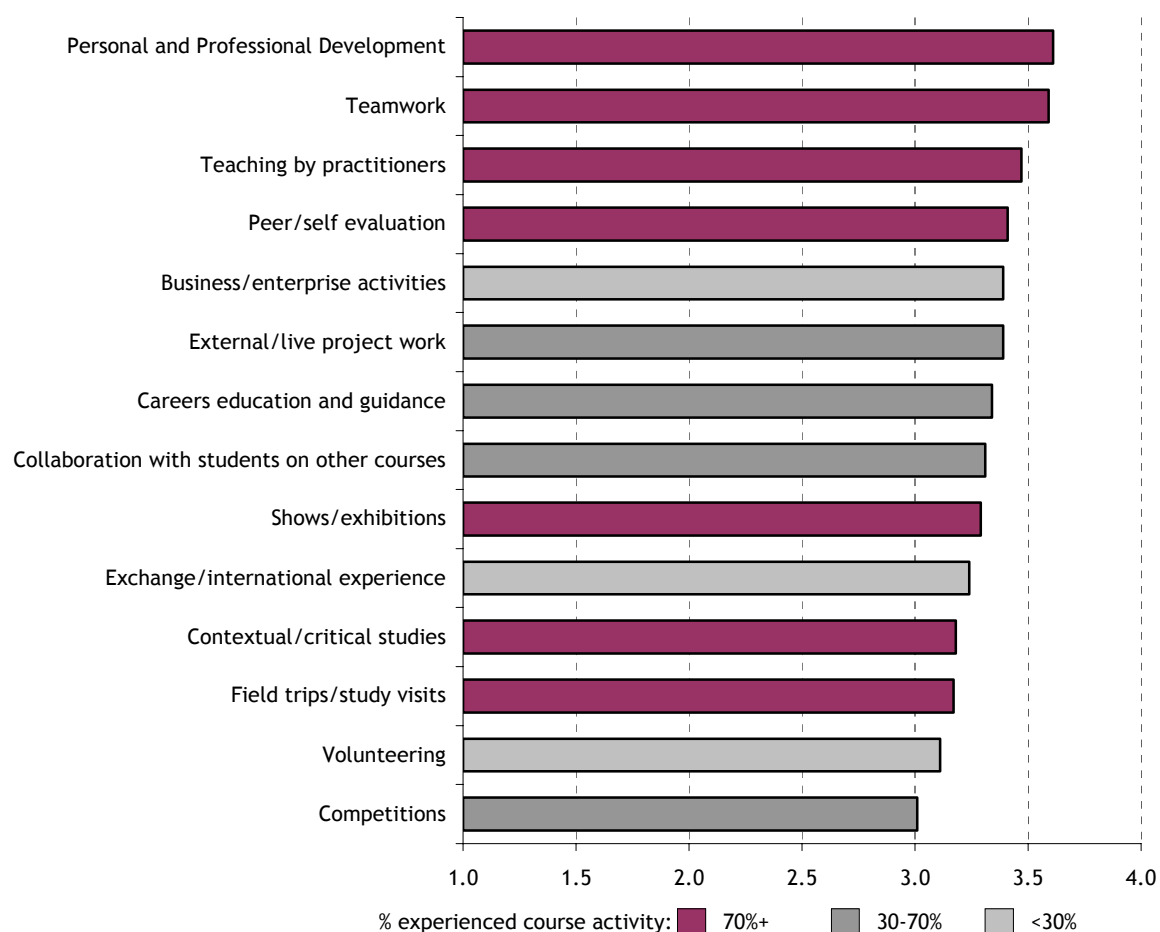
The comparatively low proportion of responses in this group may express the degree of optionality for these activities within courses: business/enterprise activities (28 per cent), exchange/international experience (26 per cent) and volunteering (18 per cent). Low participation rates in business/enterprise activities are perhaps surprising in a sector that returns high levels of self-employment and micro-business activity. Business/enterprise activities were relatively more common in applied arts and crafts (41 per cent) and fashion design courses (39 per cent) in contrast to fine art courses at 14 per cent, which may reflect other priorities for curriculum design. However, in spite of the perceived low proportions experiencing business/enterprise, it should be noted that these aspects are likely to be embedded in project work, rather than offered as discrete course elements. It is interesting to see a similar picture in relation to graduates' rating of skill development (see Chapter 5).

One in three fine artists (32 per cent) had participated in exchange or international experience and this may be regarded as significant and valued provision. Volunteering was highest among courses in fine art (24 per cent) and fashion design (23 per cent).

#### 4.4.2 Usefulness of course activities

Overall, graduates experiencing these course activities rated the majority of elements as either useful or very useful to career development – with average scores across all subjects of study ranging from 3.0 (fairly useful) to 4.0 (very useful) (see Figure 4.10). PPD, team-working and teaching by practitioners (which tended to be commonly available) were seen as particularly useful.

**Figure 4.10: Usefulness of course activities (mean score<sup>#</sup>) and proportion experiencing the named activities**



Note: <sup>#</sup> those experiencing the activity

Note: where 1=not at all, 2=not very, 3=fairly, and 4=very. The higher the score the more useful the activity

Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Tables App. A12/13.1, A12/13.5*

The perceived usefulness of course elements in career development did not always correspond with their frequency. This is to be expected when some elements are central to courses and others are more optional enriching experiences, with additional variations between disciplines.

### Usefulness by subject discipline and current work

As well as differences by subject, perceptions of usefulness were also influenced by current work situation, whether employed, self-employed, and in creative work (see Tables App. A12/13.5 – 13.8). Each activity is discussed in descending order of usefulness (based on the mean score).

**Personal and Professional Development (PPD):** widely recognised and rated as the most useful element in most disciplines and in relation to all areas of current work. PPD typically includes students' own assessment of their learning progress, skills development, Personal Development Planning (PDP) in relation to career aspirations and taught elements relating to aspects of professional practice.

**Teamwork:** rated very highly in most disciplines (particularly fashion design, media production, and other visual and interdisciplinary arts) although it was seen as distinctly less useful to those in fine art and applied arts and crafts disciplines. Team-working was considered more useful among those currently working for someone else as opposed to those with some form of self-employment.

**Teaching by practitioners:** valued across all groups and rated highly by graduates in fine art and applied arts and crafts who had the highest participation rates. There is a clear and positive difference in the perceived usefulness of instruction by those with industry experience to graduates who are currently engaged in some form of self-employment, and/or working in a creative occupation or in the creative industries.

**Peer/self evaluation:** provides the foundations for the development of criticism, independent learning and the identification of new learning goals, and was experienced by the vast majority of graduates. It was most commonly found on fine art courses and was relatively more useful to these graduates and applied arts and crafts graduates than to graduates from other subject disciplines.

**Business/enterprise activities:** also highly rated amongst those who experienced them. However (as noted above) less than one third had done so. Usefulness varied considerably by discipline. Although fine artists had fewer opportunities for business and enterprise activities during their courses, these activities were highly rated. They were also well regarded by applied arts and crafts graduates and fashion design graduates – all of whom had higher levels exposure to these activities. Unsurprisingly, these activities were also considered more useful to graduates who currently have some form of self-employment (running their own business or working freelance). However, as noted earlier, business and enterprise activities may be somewhat hidden, as much of this learning is integrated within core study and other activities such as live project work, work placements and PPD.



**External/live project work:** experienced by over half the respondents, and is a core activity conventionally used to introduce a 'real-world' dimension and an insight into client need. Graphic design, applied arts and crafts and 3D design graduates rated this experience as most useful and this may reflect a particular sense of the professional activity's relationship with clients or commissioned work. Here too, graduates who had some form of self-employment at the time and/or were working in a creative occupation or in the creative industries perceived this type of activity as more useful than those working away from the sector or in other roles.

**Careers education and guidance:** with fewer than half of graduates accessing this activity, those from applied arts and crafts courses appeared to be the most appreciative, rating it relatively highly (as useful as teaching by practitioners). Careers guidance had much lower scores for other visual and interdisciplinary arts and 3-D design courses. Later on in this chapter we will see that graduates were likely to use careers services after graduation and that those who did, on the whole, found this useful (see Section 4.5 below)

**Collaboration with students on other courses:** rated more highly in terms of usefulness to careers by graphic design, fashion design, media production and electronic design and particularly other visual and interdisciplinary arts graduates. It is interesting to note that even when their course involved collaboration with others, applied arts and crafts graduates tended not to regard this as particularly useful for their career.

**Shows/exhibitions:** experienced by almost all graduates, though surprisingly one of the greatest mismatches with usefulness scores. These were relatively more useful to fine art and applied arts and crafts graduates – disciplines that might be more likely to present their work in this way. There is a positive difference in the perceived usefulness of shows and exhibitions to those graduates who are currently engaged in some form of self-employment, and/or working in a creative occupation or in the creative industries.

**Exchange or international experience:** around a quarter of graduates overall experienced this activity and it was rated most highly by graduates from fine art, fashion design and applied arts and crafts courses.

**Contextual/critical studies:** a core course element, experienced by the vast majority of graduates, yet this received a relatively low usefulness rating, perhaps due to perceptions of the direct relevance of academic study for career development. Contextual/critical studies typically provides the broad historical and contemporary contexts for creative practice and encourages the development of oral and written criticism, important foundations for professional practice. Fine art graduates were the most likely to experience this activity, and these graduates together with those in applied arts and crafts graduates tended to rate this activity more highly than others.

**Field trips and study visits:** three quarters of graduates had participated in these activities, yet they received a relatively low rating in terms of usefulness, and the greatest mismatch between participation and usefulness. Applied arts and crafts and fine art graduates were likely to rate these activities more highly than others.

**Volunteering:** as a comparatively minor option it was experienced by fewer than one in five graduates overall and received the second lowest rating of all activities. The highest incidence was for fine art graduates, who also rated it as the most useful across subjects. Fashion design students had also experienced it but found it less useful.

**Competitions:** were perceived to be the least useful of course activities to career development, although over half the respondents had participated in them. Competitions were considered more useful by fine art and applied arts and crafts graduates, but these groups experienced low participation, along with media production and electronic design and other visual and inter-disciplinary arts. Graphic design and fashion design graduates, who reported the highest participation in competitions, did not rate them as particularly useful. Competitions expose students' creativity to more objective criteria – along with external projects, commissions and live projects. Many competitions are set up specifically to promote new talent and success may lead to prizes, publicity, promotion, work attachments and a degree of recognition. The relatively low rating for this activity may reflect personal experience of competitions in which only a select few will achieve success.

#### 4.4.3 General feedback on course experiences

Graduates were invited to comment on anything they felt was important about their course experience. Many took this opportunity, providing positive feedback on aspects of their courses they valued and enjoyed, along with criticisms and constructive suggestions.

Graduates appreciated that their courses were exciting and stimulating and encouraged free and creative thought, providing a general grounding:

*'I think the course was very creative and exciting, however now that I work in the fashion industry I know now that I wasn't really experienced/knowledgeable when I left to be very employable. However now I am looking to employ graduates and their industry/technical knowledge in general seems improved ....'*

*'I felt I had a very good grounding creatively, but was not well prepared for the realities of the industry.'*

Tutors appeared to greatly influence graduates' experiences. Some graduates were very positive about academic staff, with many individuals singled out for praise.

*'The biggest strength of the course was the personal input of the tutors which had the biggest impact on my life post degree.'*

*'A fantastically creative course that's very challenging and diverse. Tutors were exceptional in their teaching, creativity and support. Maybe just needs a bit more of the real life through deadlines.'*

Graduates were also very positive about the technicians in the HEIs.

*'I actually found the college technicians to be the most valuable persons who imparted their knowledge and support to make your work and studies develop.'*

However, many felt that the courses lacked relevance and contact with the 'real' world of work. Graduates would have liked their courses to have prepared them better for working in the creative industries and working to industry standards, for example, having shorter deadlines for project work, to reflect real-life client demands.

*'I feel more outside experiences from placements in the industry would benefit future designers. I was unprepared for what working in a live studio would be like - project time spans at university were very long and the real world in design is quite contrasting. Also relations with design studios may have benefited me when interviewing for jobs.'*

Other suggestions included greater contact with employers through work placements and visits, and seminars and lectures with practitioners. This was echoed in comments about skill development lacking from courses (see Chapter 5).

Greater access to facilities and software used in the creative industries was also suggested by many respondents:

*'I believe more time should have been spent on software skills, project management, self-promotion and portfolio presentation.'*

Others felt that equipment in general was not up to standard or there was not enough for the number of students:

*'To be trained on more modern and up to date equipment.'*

The struggle that many graduates reported in getting into their first creative job was often attributed to a lack of careers guidance alongside other factors. They called for guidance on self-employment, putting a portfolio together, 'soft skills' in marketing their work, and information on potential career pathways.

*'I would have appreciated more guidance about career paths after art education, even if this was to prepare me for a period of expected unemployment and how to survive it.'*

This again highlights the importance of career guidance activity both during undergraduate courses and after graduation. Others felt that their creative education had been valuable preparation for life:

*'It was the best course I could have done but it didn't end up with a career in photography instead it shaped my creativity and made me adaptable, articulate and able to think outside the box for which I am so grateful.'*

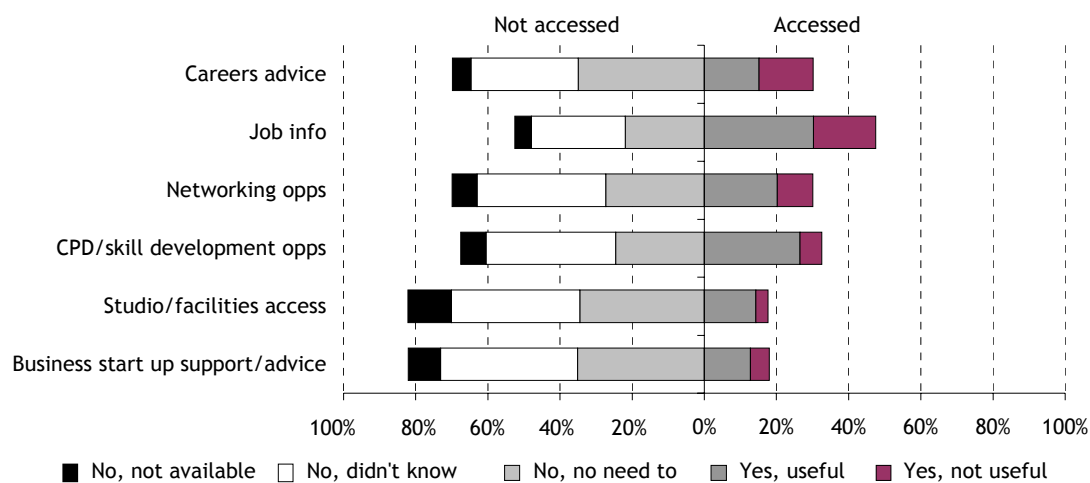
Further feedback by graduates in relation to skill development is discussed in Chapter 5.

## 4.5 What post-graduation support do graduates value?

After graduating, our respondents accessed a range of support from their institutions (Figure 4.11). Almost half had received information about vacancies and work opportunities (48 per cent), and around one-third had accessed opportunities for continuing professional development or developing new skills (33 per cent), networking opportunities (30 per cent), and careers advice (30 per cent). Although access to career guidance appeared lower than found for vacancy information, it should be noted that regular job vacancy bulletins are an important part of careers services provision.

Fewer than one in five graduates accessed studio or other facilities (18 per cent) after they graduated or business start-up advice or support (18 per cent).

In general, respondents who had not accessed the kinds of support listed, said they had no need to, or were not aware of it, rather than because support was not available.

**Figure 4.11: Usefulness of support accessed since completing first/foundation degree**

Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A16.2*

#### 4.5.1 Experiences of post-graduation support by different groups

It is interesting to note that the proportion of graduates accessing post graduation support varied by personal background and study background, as did perceptions of the usefulness of these activities or facilities. These differences are discussed below and illustrated in Figures 4.12, 4.13 and 4.14.

Information about **vacancies and job opportunities** was considered to be the most useful post-graduation support with almost twice as many finding it useful than did not (30 compared to 17 per cent, see Table App. A16.2). Those most likely to have accessed job information after completing their undergraduate courses were: women (49 per cent), younger graduates (under 25 years old, 53 per cent), home students (49 per cent), those with disabilities (other than dyslexia, 53 per cent), those with first class degrees (52 per cent), and those from fine art (53 per cent), applied arts and crafts (52 per cent) and also fashion design courses (50 per cent, see Tables App. A16.3 and A16.4).

In terms of opportunities for **continuing professional development** and developing new skills, when accessed, graduates overwhelmingly found it to be useful (27 per cent compared to six per cent). Those most likely to have accessed CPD opportunities after graduating were: older graduates (40 or older, 46 per cent), disabled graduates (disabilities other than dyslexia, 46 per cent), those with first class degrees (36 per cent), and those from applied arts and crafts courses (43 per cent). Lower levels of access were found amongst graphic design graduates (28 per cent). Those working in a self-employed capacity were also more likely to access this form of post graduation support (38 per cent, see Table App. A16.5).

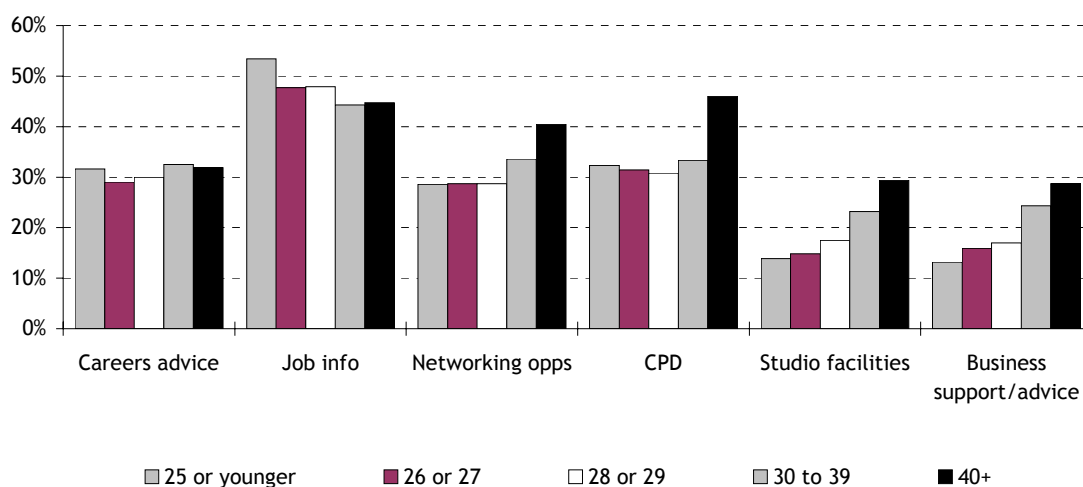
Again, **networking opportunities**, when accessed, tended to be appreciated by graduates, with 20 per cent finding it useful compared to 10 per cent that did not. Those most likely to have accessed networking opportunities were: older graduates (40 or older, 41 per

cent), disabled graduates (disabilities other than dyslexia, 38 per cent), those with first class degrees (36 per cent), and those from fine art and applied arts and crafts courses (36 and 35 per cent). Considerably lower levels of access were found amongst 3-D design graduates (24 per cent). Also those currently working in creative roles (34 per cent) or in the creative industries (33 per cent) were relatively more likely to have sought this form of support; as were those who were self-employed (38 per cent).

Graduates accessing **careers advice** appeared to split evenly into those that found it useful and those that did not (15 per cent accessed it and found it useful and 15 per cent accessed it and did not find it useful). Over one-third of graduates (35 per cent) did not seek out any careers advice after graduating because they had no need of it. Those most likely to have accessed careers advice after graduating were: disabled graduates (disabilities other than dyslexia, 40 per cent), those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (37 per cent) and graduates from fine art, and applied arts and crafts courses (both 34 per cent). As noted above, applied arts and crafts graduates were the most appreciative of this form of support during their courses. Relatively fewer graduates from graphic design and from media production and electronic design accessed this form of support (26 per cent of each).

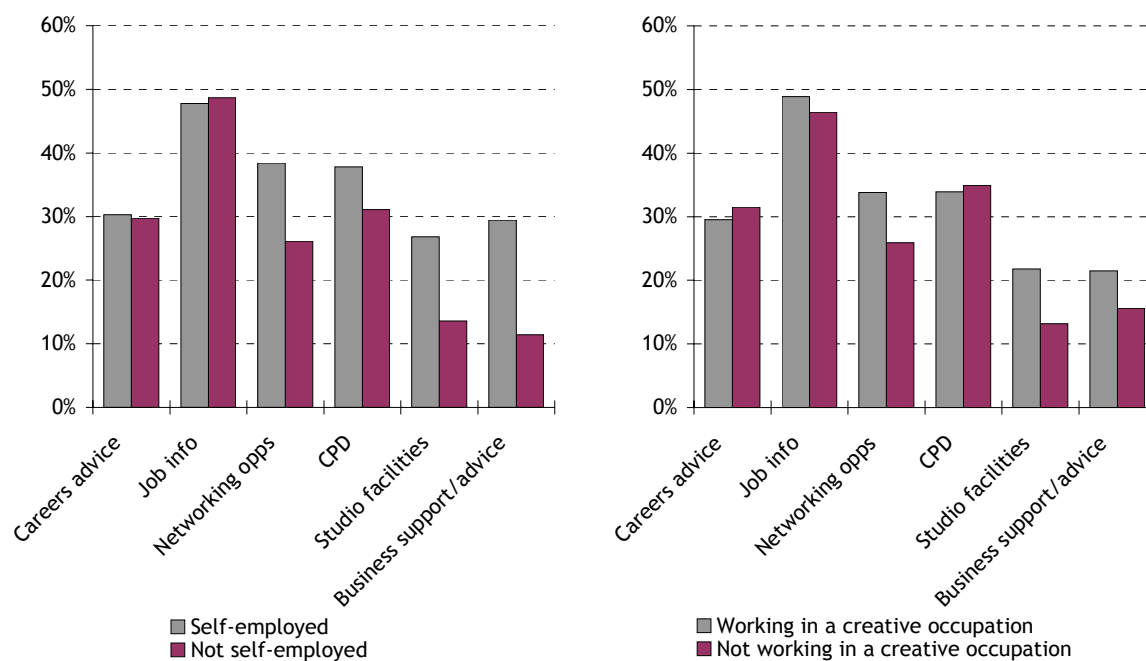
**Studio space and facilities** were also appreciated when accessed (14 per cent found it useful compared to three per cent who did not) but were not relevant to all graduates. One in ten graduates (12 per cent) said these facilities were not on offer. Those most likely to have accessed studio space post graduation were: older graduates (who were more than twice as likely to do so than their younger peers, 29 per cent compared to 14 per cent), those who graduated earlier (2002 cohort, 20 per cent), those with first class degrees (23 per cent), and those from fine art and applied arts and crafts courses (28 and 30 per cent). There was much less take up of studio space amongst design graduates (those from graphic design 14 per cent, fashion design 14 per cent, and 3-D design courses 13 per cent). Those working in creative roles (22 per cent) or in the creative industries (21 per cent) were relatively more likely to have sought this form of support, as were those in self-employment (27 per cent).

More than twice as many graduates found **business start up advice and support** useful as did not (13 compared to five per cent). Those most likely to have accessed this support after completing their undergraduate courses were: older graduates (who were more than twice as likely to do so than their younger peers, 29 per cent compared to 13 per cent), graduates with dyslexia (25 per cent), those with first class degrees (21 per cent), and those from applied arts and crafts courses (32 per cent) – all groups with considerably greater likelihood of working freelance and/or setting up their own businesses during their early careers (see Chapters 6 and 7). Graduates who were self-employed were considerably more likely than those working in other ways (29 per cent compared to 11 per cent) to have accessed business start up advice and support, as were those working in creative roles (22 per cent) or in the creative industries (21 per cent).

**Figure 4.12: Support accessed since completing first/foundation degree - by age group**

Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses

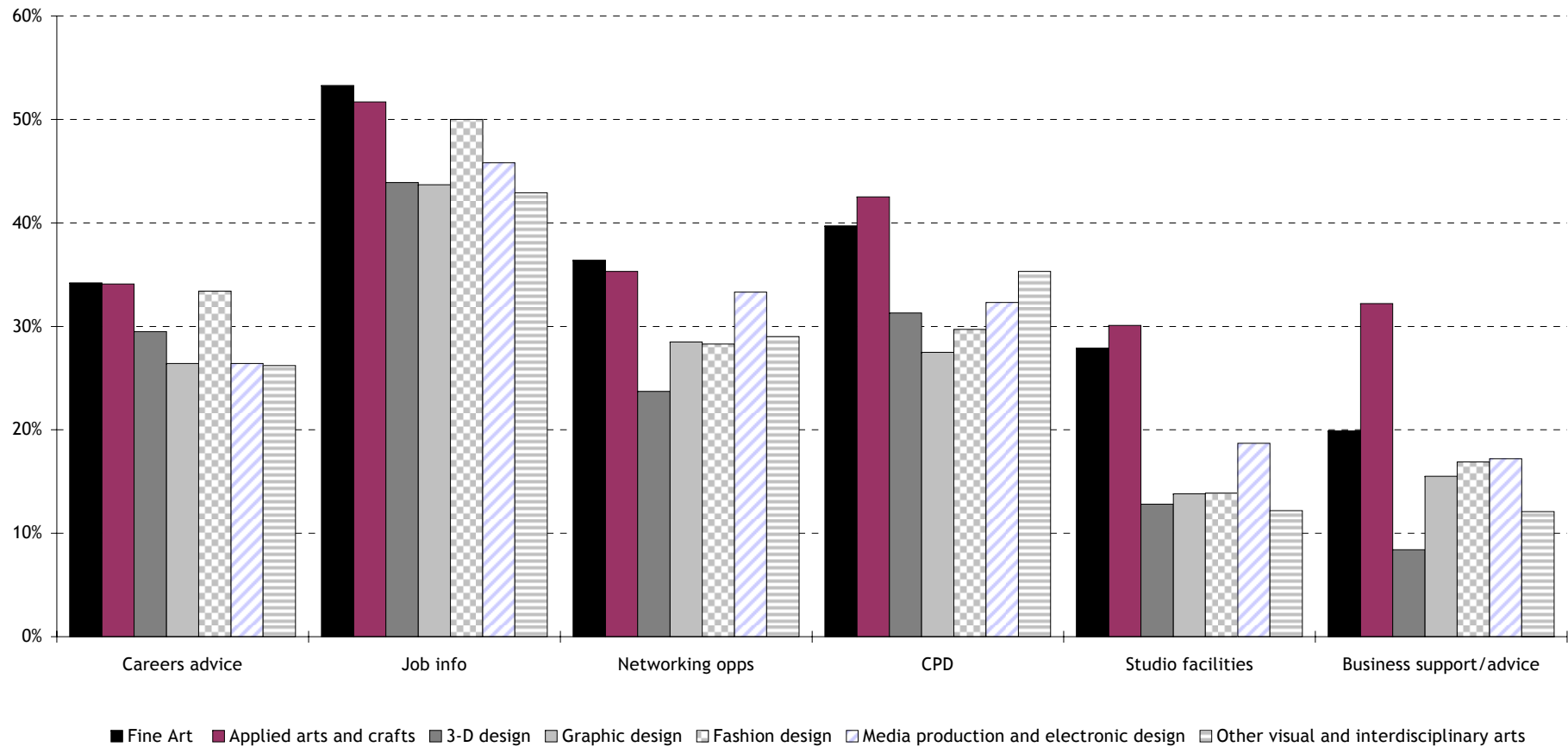
Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A16.3*

**Figure 4.13: Support accessed since completing first/foundation degree - by work characteristics**

Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses and currently in work

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A16.5*

Figure 4.14: Support accessed since completing first/foundation degree - by subject group



Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses

Source: Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A16.



Findings suggest that HEIs may need to increase the visibility of the support they continue to provide to individuals, even after they complete their courses – particularly networking opportunities, access to studio facilities, business advice and especially opportunities for continued professional development. All these were found to be useful, when accessed, yet a substantial group of graduates – over one-third – were unaware that this support could be available to them. Post-graduation support is linked to current work activity. In most cases those working in creative occupations or in creative industries were considerably more likely to have accessed these forms of support.

Some graduates make more use of the range of support available or are more aware of it than others – particularly disabled graduates, those with first class degrees, and graduates from fine art and from applied arts and crafts courses.

## 4.6 Summary

- Creative practice is at the core of the learning process and provides the context for learning in relation to academic, employment and professional development outcomes. Opportunities to apply creativity in different settings naturally occur within courses as students engage with a variety of project work, industry-linked initiatives, placements, collaborations, exhibitions and competitions.
- Placement activity had improved since D&R, with two fifths of CGCF respondents (42 per cent) having undertaken work placements of some kind, either as a course requirement or outside of the curriculum, compared with just under one third D&R (29 per cent).
- Over half (57 per cent) of CGCF respondents who undertook placements had done so as a course requirement, compared with 42 per cent D&R. However, in an industry dominated by micro-businesses with limited capacity for taking on students, these opportunities are unlikely to increase.
- Placements were regarded as important to career development, and longer placements were considered to be more useful. Graduates felt that placements were essential for preparing for the transition to work, providing an insight into working practices and contacts in industry, and indeed experience of formal on-course placement activity appears to be associated with gaining creative work.
- Graduates were pro-active with 20 per cent organising their own extra placements, which on balance they found more useful than required placements. Those in creative work were almost twice as likely as those working in other roles to have had these extra placements (24 per cent compared to 14 per cent).
- Informal work experience was more common than formal placements, with two-thirds undertaking paid work during term-time and/or in vacations, but this was not as highly valued in career development terms as work placements.



- Five course activities were widely experienced across all courses and can be regarded as characteristic of the sector as a whole, with more than four out of five graduates experiencing shows and exhibitions, peer/self evaluation, team-working, contextual/critical studies and teaching by practitioners.
- PPD appears to be both widely recognised, and valued – rated as the most useful course element, followed by teamwork, teaching by practitioners and peer/self evaluation. Practitioners' input into courses was considered to be highly influential to graduates' career experiences.
- Shows and exhibitions and contextual/critical studies were considered less useful than the majority of activities, although the majority of graduates had experienced them.
- Around half the respondents had participated in competitions, external and live projects, careers education and guidance and collaboration with students on other courses.
- Under one-third had experienced specific business and enterprise activities during their undergraduate studies. Relatively few graduates had experienced volunteering activity (and later findings suggest that this may instead have to be taken up after graduation in order to gain relevant work experience) or exchange or international experience although these were generally considered less useful than other activities.
- Many graduates found their courses exciting and stimulating and felt they had encouraged creativity, but many would have liked more contact with the 'real' world of work and the pressures and challenges they would face, greater contact with employers through placements and live project work, and access to industry-standard equipment and specialist software.
- After completing their courses, graduates accessed a range of support from their institutions, most commonly information about jobs followed by opportunities to continue to build on their skills, networking opportunities and careers advice. Fewer than one in five had accessed support and advice on starting up a business.
- Disabled graduates, those with first class degrees, and graduates from fine art and applied arts and crafts courses tended to have higher levels of access across all forms of post-graduation support. Making these services more relevant to these groups may be something HEIs will want to consider doing.

## 5 Skills development and preparation for work

This chapter:

- explores the nature of skill development, employability and enterprise in the creative curriculum
- investigates the attributes and skills that graduates developed during their creative education which they found to be most important in their early careers - within and outside of creative industries
- provides insight into how well graduates feel their courses prepared them for the world of work and identifies areas where courses could be improved.

This chapter explores the extent to which a creative education develops skills and personal attributes and their relative importance to career development, as perceived by graduates. CGCF respondents clearly valued their experiences in higher education and placed particular importance on the core elements of creative practice: creativity and innovation, visual skills and presenting their work – all of which they considered to be very important to developing a career, with some under-development relating to professional, IT, entrepreneurial skills and understanding client needs.

### 5.1 Employability and skills development

The act of designing, creating or expressing is an integrated learning experience that significantly develops attributes sought by employers. As discussed in Chapter 4, graduates are potentially well-equipped for work in terms of the abilities and transferable skills they develop on their courses, that are embedded within the creative learning process. These are reflected in the following learning outcomes for employability in creative arts and design subjects.

Creative arts and design students:

- apply their learning in different contextual frameworks
- generate ideas, concepts, proposals, solutions or arguments independently and collaboratively in response to set briefs and self-initiated activity

- use convergent and divergent thinking in observing, investigating, enquiring, visualising, making and developing ideas through to material outcomes
- manage the interaction between intention, process, outcome, context and dissemination
- apply resourcefulness and entrepreneurial skills to their own practice
- employ materials, media, techniques, methods, technologies and tools with skills and imagination whilst observing good working practices
- study independently, set goals, manage their own workloads and meet deadlines
- anticipate and accommodate change, handle ambiguity, uncertainty.<sup>9</sup>

What is noticeable in this list is that many of the attributes required for working in creative employment – such as problem-solving, independence, enterprise and collaborative working – align with those developed in the learning process (as discussed in Chapter 4). More recent studies make similar connections between learning behaviours in the creative curriculum, the development of tacit skills such as resourcefulness and handling ambiguity, and graduates' potential for innovation and entrepreneurial endeavour (NESTA/ADM-HEA, 2007 and Bakshi et al., 2008).

D&R also recognised the relationship between the creative curriculum and employment:

*'Art and design, probably more than any other sector, develops graduates' critical and creative abilities and their imagination. Employers want risk-takers, lateral thinkers and creative problem solvers and art and design graduates have the potential to excel in these areas. Graduates should be encouraged to develop and make the most of these aspects of their art and design education.'*

Blackwell and Harvey, 1999, p.129

Yet, in the context of career progression, the tacit nature of skills learned through creative practice (such as resourcefulness, solving problems, handling material and working in three dimensions), and graduates' reticence in articulating these strengths can be barriers to maintaining confidence and finding work. These important skills may be 'hidden' from students, unless explicitly discussed and valued by both staff and students. D&R also recognised this problem:

*'In essence, art and design graduates exhibit, or rapidly develop, most of these attributes and are well-placed to make inroads into the graduate recruitment market. However, it is a moot point whether the graduates themselves are aware of this, whether they get assistance from their institutions to make the most of their attributes and, fundamentally, whether those teaching in the sector are aware of the employment prospects.'*

Blackwell and Harvey, 1999, p.v

D&R was instrumental in contributing to the formation of employability strategies in creative higher education by raising awareness of the rich learning experienced by students and how courses might better prepare them for work. Indeed, there have been

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<sup>9</sup> *Student Employability Profiles for Art, Design and Media Subjects*, Graduate Prospects/HE Academy (Rees, Forbes and Kubler, 2007).

great changes in courses over the last decade with employability and enterprise becoming established priorities across all higher education institutions in the UK, with a stronger emphasis on preparing graduates for the transition to work.

### Embedded models for employability and enterprise education

The prevailing model for employability is to embed development of these skills and attributes within the academic domain through course work, structured work placement and work-related learning, as discussed in Chapter 4. Similarly, best practice for enterprise education is integration within the subject of study. A study involving 80 higher education art and design institutions, found that the majority of courses embedded entrepreneurial learning within project-based work, and 70 per cent of courses assessed entrepreneurship learning outcomes, thus explicitly valuing these attributes (NESTA/ADM-HEA, 2007). This and other published findings suggest that enterprise education embraces important life-skills, leading to a broader model for enterprise:

*'... based on the view that the role of entrepreneurship in society is that it provides an opportunity for individuals and organisations of all kinds and in all walks of life to cope with, provoke, and perhaps enjoy an increasingly complex and uncertain world.'*

Gibb, 2005

### Skills and industry needs

There have been important advances in recent years, in particular in technology, for example in the growth of the computer games industry, in which creative graduates play an important part – demonstrating a synergy between creative graduates and new computer software development. The pace of technological change and changes in working practices in all sectors increasingly require people to be multi-skilled and work in inter-disciplinary teams.

In the creative sector, skills shortages have been identified in client-facing skills, project management and IT/software and there are concerns about maintaining competitiveness by paying attention to skills renewal and updating. These aspects are core to government and creative industry strategies. In the design sector, in particular, there are concerns about how well design education prepares its students for the workplace: *'designers need to be equipped with the kinds of skills that enable them to work effectively in the modern business world, meeting the expectations of their clients'* (Whyte and Bessant, 2007).

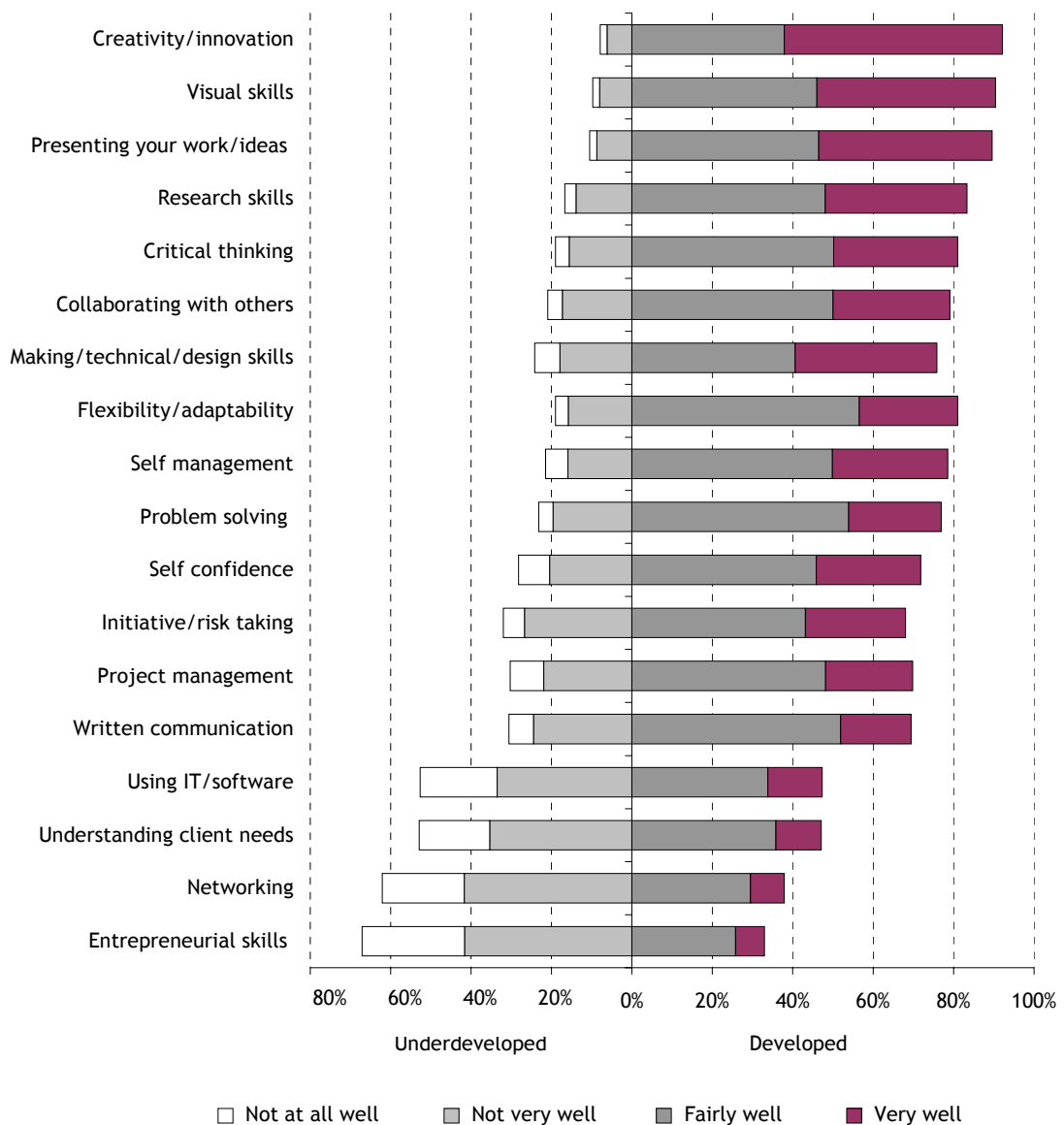
## 5.2 What skills and attributes are developed in a creative education?

Respondents were asked to rate their development in 18 skill areas and overall they felt that their creative education had developed many of the skills required for their careers (Figure 5.1). In terms of the level of skills development achieved, the mean scores show a positive picture, with all attributes and skills achieving above 2.15 on a four point scale, and nine of the skills areas achieving a mean score of 3 or above (range: 1 = *not at all well* to 4 = *very well*).

Graduates were most satisfied with the **core creative and intellectual skills** that are fundamental to creative practice: creativity and innovation (54 per cent), visual skills (44 per cent) and presenting work and ideas (43 per cent), all of which were rated as being very well developed. Research skills, critical thinking, collaborating with others and making/design skills were also considered to be well developed.

Skill development in the mid-range was mainly focused around **personal effectiveness** – such as flexibility/adaptability, self-management, problem solving and self-confidence, followed by initiative/risk taking, project management and written communication.

**Figure 5.1: Extent of skill development on course**



Note: ordered by mean score

Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A9.2*

Areas considered to be less well-developed were mainly in **professional skills**: IT/software skills (19 per cent not at all compared to 14 per cent very well developed), understanding client needs (18 per cent compared to 11 per cent) and networking (20 per cent compared to eight per cent). Graduates were least satisfied with the development of entrepreneurial skills (with 26 per cent considering that these skills were not at all developed during their course, compared to only seven per cent very well developed).

As discussed earlier, entrepreneurial skills may be ‘hidden’ within curriculum activities and may not be recognised by graduates as important. In this respect, for our study, it is worth noting that many of the skills areas that were well developed, such as creativity/innovation, initiative/risk taking, problem solving and critical thinking are core entrepreneurial skills.

### 5.2.1 Differences in perceived level of skill development

Differences need to be read in the context of graduates’ maturity and their own individual perceptions of level of skill at the start of their course and distance travelled (Tables App. A9.3 to A9.6).

#### Differences by background characteristics

**Gender, age and domicile:** On the whole, women were more positive about development of skills during their studies than men. However, men were relatively more likely to have felt they developed IT skills and self-confidence than their female peers. Older graduates were more likely to consider skills were well developed during their courses than their younger peers. The exceptions were understanding client needs and project management where younger graduates were relatively more likely than older graduates to feel these had been well developed (although for all ages these skills were considered to be under-developed). On the whole, international graduates were the least positive about skill development on their courses.

**Ethnicity, disability and parental experience of HE:** Graduates from white backgrounds were generally more positive in their assessment of skill development than those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. Graduates with no disability and disabled graduates were generally more positive than those with dyslexia. Graduates whose parents had been to university appeared to be relatively more critical of skill development than others, particularly in terms of written communication, using IT and research skills.

#### Differences by study characteristics

**Year of graduation:** There was no real difference in skill development across the different cohorts. The exception is the increased likelihood of IT skills being regarded as well developed over time/across the cohorts, indicating that provision has improved in this area.

**Degree classification:** A positive assessment of skill development is closely linked to better degree outcomes with graduates achieving a first class degree being considerably more likely to rate skill development highly.

### 5.3 Which skills and attributes are most important to career development?

Graduates were asked to rate the same 18 skill areas in terms of how important they had been to the development of their career – where 1 = *not at all important* through to 4 = *very important*. The vast majority of graduates thought that all skill areas were important for their career development, and scores were high, ranging from a mean of 2.92 for entrepreneurial skills to 3.69 for self-confidence (see Table App. A10.1)

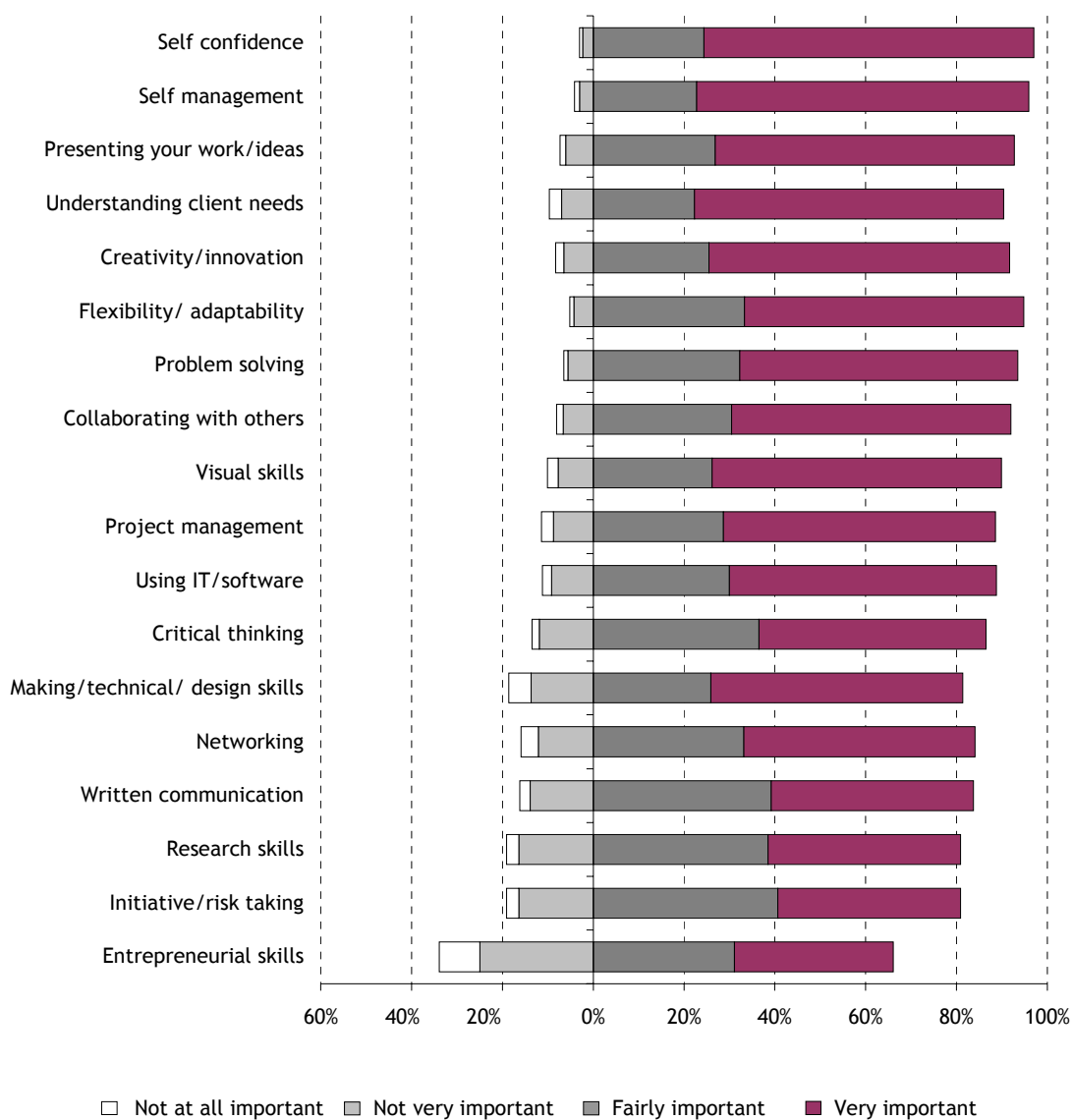
**Personal effectiveness and professional skills** were especially prominent alongside **core creative and intellectual skills** (see Figure 5.2). More than three out of five graduates considered self-confidence (73 per cent), self-management (73 per cent), understanding client needs (68 per cent), creativity/innovation (66 per cent), presenting work/ideas (66 per cent), flexibility/adaptability (62 per cent), problem solving (61 per cent), collaborating with others (62 per cent), and visual skills (64 per cent) to be very important (Figure 5.2).

On the other end of the scale, written communication (16 per cent), research skills (19 per cent), making/technical design skills (19 per cent), initiative/risk-taking (19 per cent), and entrepreneurial skills (34 per cent) were not very/not at all important to their career development, the last achieving the lowest mean score.

#### Differences in importance by study characteristics and career outcomes

**Degree classification and year of graduation:** (Table App. A10.3) Academically more successful graduates found all skills important to their career development, and felt their skills were well developed. There was very little difference in the perceived importance of creative skills across the cohorts, and this perhaps suggests that the need for particular skills does not fluctuate greatly over time or during different stages of one's early career. The only real exceptions were that written communication appeared to be less important for more recent graduates (or those in the early stages of their careers), and there had been a fall in the perceived importance of risk-taking for the 2004 cohort. It may be that graduates in their early careers are less likely to try self-employment, or take risks.

**Self-employment and creative work:** (Table App. A10.5) Most skills appeared to be important for those who were self-employed, with the exception of written communication and collaboration with others. All skills were important for those working in creative occupations and creative industries, compared with those working in other areas (again the exception is written communication). Technical and entrepreneurial skills were not important for those working outside creative industries.

**Figure 5.2: Importance of skills in career development**

Note: ordered by mean score

Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A10.2*



## 5.4 How does skill development compare with importance to careers?

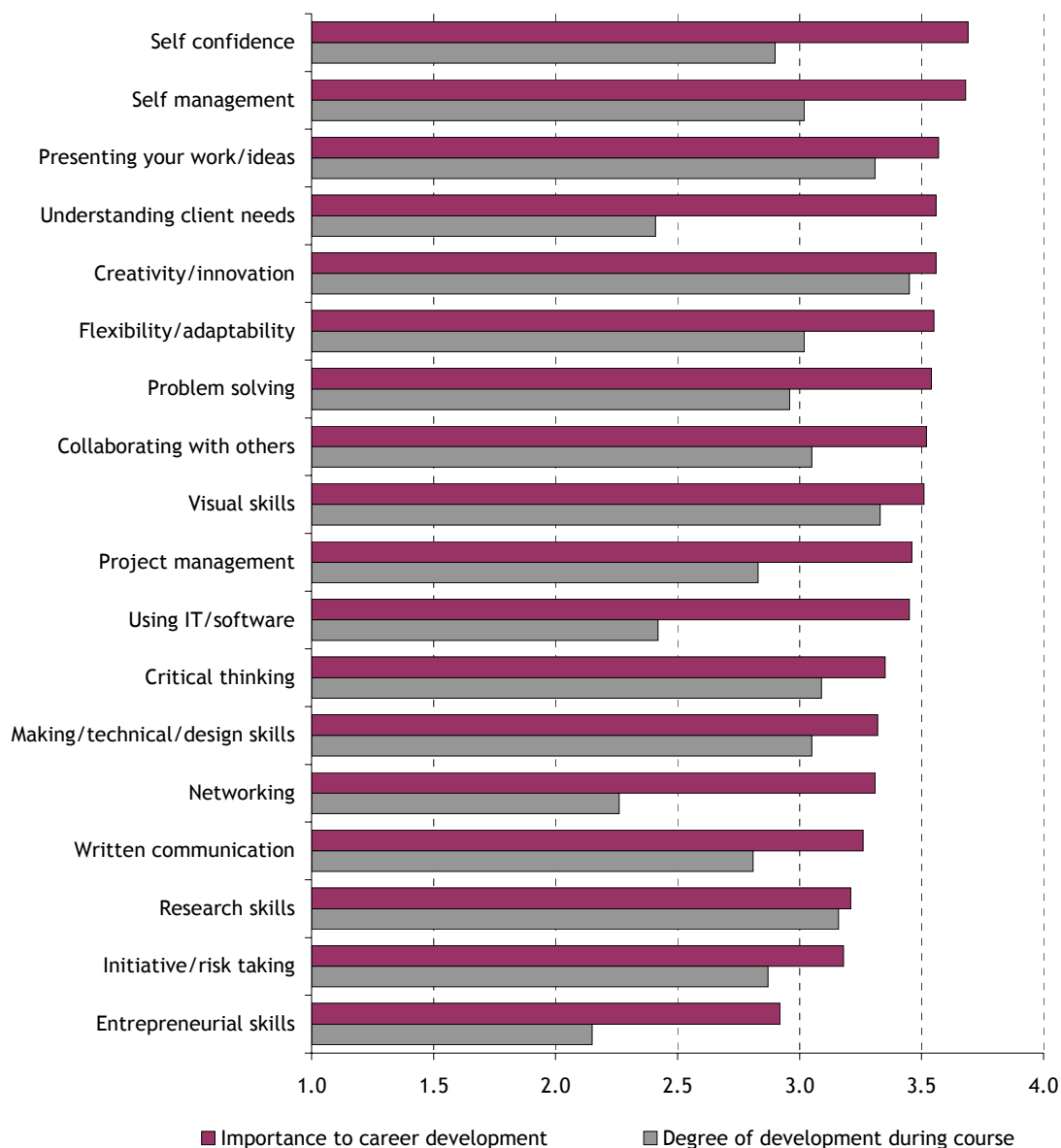
Figures 5.3 and 5.4 explore the relationship between the importance of skills and the development of skills, and it is interesting to note that in Figure 5.3 the importance of skills is ranked consistently higher than the degree of skills development.

Areas that looked to be well-matched in both development and importance were in the main the **core creative and intellectual skills** of creativity/innovation, presenting work/ideas, visual skills, and collaborating with others. These all appear in the top right hand quadrant in Figure 5.4, indicating they were considered to be both of critical importance and also well developed. In addition the core creative intellectual skills of critical thinking, making/technical skills, and research skills, considered to be of importance to careers, were also considered to be well- developed during the creative education process (appearing in the bottom right hand quadrant).

**Personal effectiveness skills** such as self-confidence and self-management were considered to be the most important to careers and developed to some degree during studies (appearing in the top right quadrant). However, these were considered to be less well-developed than the core creative skills above. The other personal effectiveness skills of flexibility/adaptability, problem-solving and project management were considered relatively important and well developed (top right quadrant). Written communication and initiative/risk taking were deemed to be considerably less important to careers and equally less well developed than other skills (bottom right quadrant).

**Professional skills** on which courses might wish to focus their attention are the use of IT/software and, in particular, understanding client needs. These both appear in the top left quadrant, indicating they were considered highly important to career development yet were under-developed. Networking and entrepreneurial skills were felt to be not well developed (bottom left quadrant) but were generally considered to be less important to careers. Given the high incidence of self-employment and business start up this is perhaps a surprising finding.

**Figure 5.3: Skill development during undergraduate studies compared with importance to career development (ranked by importance mean score<sup>#</sup>)**

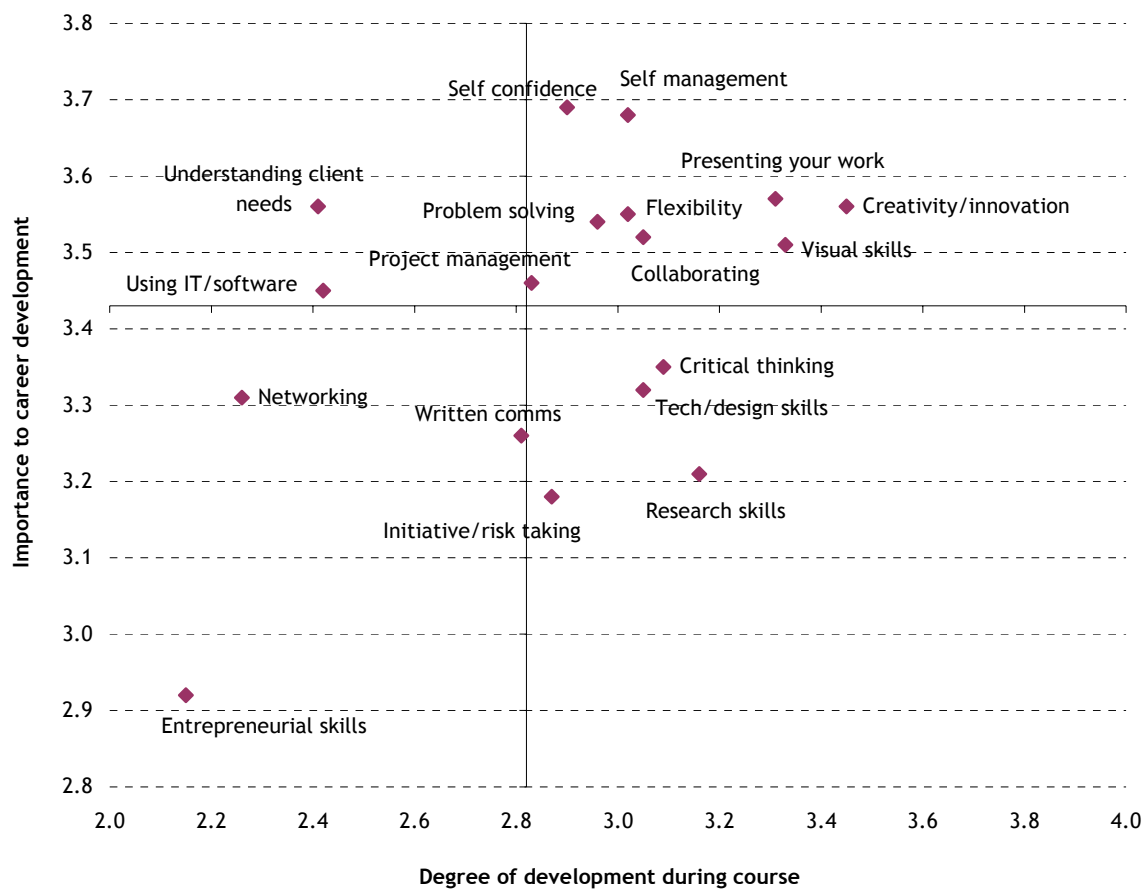


Note: <sup>#</sup> where 1=not at all, 2=not very, 3=fairly, and 4=very. The higher the mean score the more developed or more important the skill

Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Tables App. A9.1 and A10.1*

**Figure 5.4: Plotting mean scores<sup>#</sup> of skill development during undergraduate studies by importance to career development**



Note: <sup>#</sup> where 1=not at all, 2=not very, 3=fairly, and 4=very. The higher the mean score the more developed or more important the skill

Note: each axis crosses at the average: the average importance score across all skills is 3.43 and the average development score across all skills is 2.82

Base: all respondents from undergraduate courses

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A9/10.3*

#### 5.4.1 Comparing skill development and importance with *Destinations and Reflections (D&R)*

Many of the skills were explored in both surveys, and those present at both time points were compared (and scales adjusted to allow for comparison) (Table 5.1). Generally, graduates appear to be more satisfied with skill development than 10 years ago and consider skills to be more important to their career development than previously found, indicated by higher mean scores.

In D&R, initiative/risk-taking had greater prominence and provides the greatest contrast between the two studies. It was considered to be the most important of the matched skills to career development and was relatively less important to graduates in this survey. Graduates were *'only particularly impressed by the development of visual skills and creativity*

and innovation.’ (D&R, p.88). These two skills areas achieve the highest development scores for CGCF graduates, indicating that core creative skills continue to underpin students’ learning experience. Presentation and collaborating with others (team-working) also had much improved scores in the present study.

D&R respondents were less than satisfied with the development of team-working, written communication and self-promotion. In D&R, graduates ‘tended to under-rate the need for good written communication skills and often discover this once they have graduated.’

**Table 5.1: Skill development and importance comparison between *Destinations and Reflections* and *Creative Graduates* (ranked by CGCF importance mean score)**

	Destinations and Reflections		Creative Graduates	
	Satisfaction <sup>#</sup>	Importance <sup>#</sup>	Development	Importance
Self confidence	2.61	3.28	2.90	3.69
Presenting your work/ideas (in D&R)	2.87	3.07	3.31	3.57
Creativity/Innovation	3.09	3.14	3.45	3.56
Flexibility/adaptability (flexibility in D&R)	2.53	2.98		
Flexibility/adaptability (adaptability in D&R)	2.63	3.05	3.02	3.55
Problem solving	2.78	3.07	2.96	3.54
Collaborating with others (team-working in D&R)	2.25	2.88	3.05	3.52
Visual skills	3.09	3.10	3.33	3.51
Critical thinking (independent and critical judgements in D&R)	2.84	3.2	3.09	3.35
Making/technical/design skills (craft and technical skills in D&R)	2.85	2.86	3.05	3.32
Written communication	2.40	2.66	2.81	3.26
Initiative/risk taking	2.94	3.29	2.87	3.18

Note: <sup>#</sup> The scores from *Destinations and Reflections* have been converted from a 7-point scale to a 4-point scale to enable comparisons (only skill areas reported in both surveys are shown).

Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses

Source: *Destinations and Reflections: Careers of British Art, Craft and Design Graduates, 1999, and Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A9/10.2*

#### 5.4.2 Comparing skill development and importance by subject discipline

CGCF graduates from each subject discipline and with different career outcomes had diverse perspectives on both the development of skills during their courses and the importance of skills to their career development. These are explored below.

**Table 5.2: Top 10 skills developed per subject area**

Fine Art	Applied arts and crafts	3-D design	Graphic design	Fashion design	Media prodn/ electronic design	Other visual/int. arts
Creativity/ innovation	Creativity/ innovation	Creativity/ innovation	Creativity/ innovation	Creativity/ innovation	Creativity/ innovation	Creativity/ innovation
Visual skills	Making/technical/design skills	Presenting your work/ideas	Visual skills	Presenting your work/ideas	Visual skills	Presenting your work/ideas
Critical thinking	Presenting your work/ideas	Visual skills	Presenting your work/ideas	Visual skills	Presenting your work/ideas	Collaborating with others
Presenting your work/ideas	Visual skills	Making/technical/design skills	Collaborating with others	Research skills	Collaborating with others	Research skills
Research skills	Research skills	Research skills	Research skills	Making/technical/design skills	Research skills	Written communication
Flexibility/ adaptability	Problem solving	Collaborating with others	Critical thinking	Self-management	Critical thinking	Self-management
Initiative/risk taking	Critical thinking	Critical thinking	Problem solving	Flexibility/ adaptability	Flexibility/ adaptability	Self confidence
Self-management	Flexibility/ adaptability	Flexibility/ adaptability	Flexibility/ adaptability	Critical thinking	Self-management	Critical thinking
Making/technical/design skills	Self-management	Problem solving	Self-management	Collaborating with others	Written communication	Flexibility/ adaptability
Collaborating with others:	Collaborating with others	Self-management	Making/technical/design skills	Project management	Self confidence	Problem solving

Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A9.8*

## Differences by subject discipline

There was considerable variability in the degree to which graduates from different disciplines felt skills were developed on their courses when comparing mean scores (Table App. A9.7). For ease of comparison, the top 10 skills developed for each subject area can be found in Table 5.2. However, there was general agreement about the importance of self-confidence, self-management, and understanding client needs to careers – most disciplines rating these the highest in terms of importance to career development (Table App. 10.4).

Flexibility/adaptability, problem-solving, critical thinking, project management and entrepreneurial skills were also similarly rated in terms of importance across the disciplines. Where there are marked differences in the development and importance of skills, and in relation to the profile for all graduates, this is commented on below.

### Fine art graduates

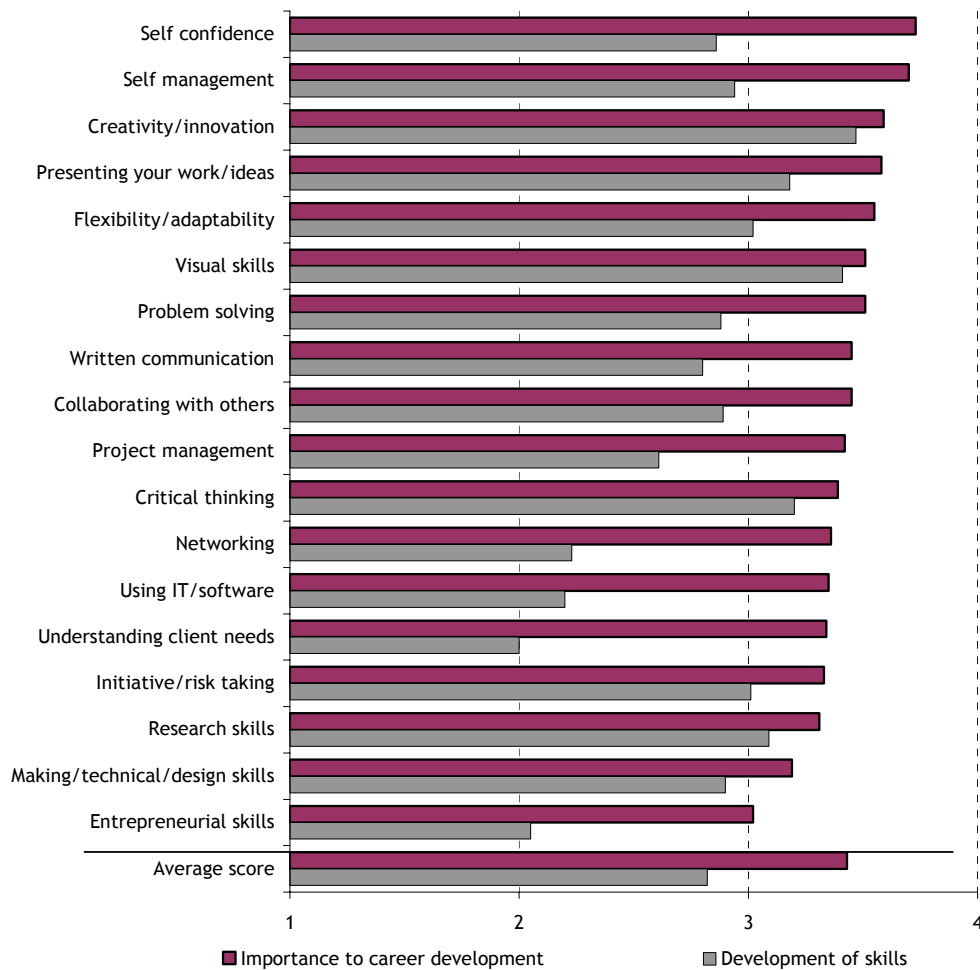
Fine art graduates (see Figure 5.5) considered presenting work, visual skills, creativity and innovation and risk-taking/initiative, to be both important and well-developed.

They were more likely than other graduates to rate highly the development of visual skills, initiative and risk-taking, and critical thinking. Risk-taking was considered by most other subject groups to be under-developed on courses, but this was not the case for fine art graduates. Visual skills were the second most highly developed skill for fine art graduates (behind creativity/innovation) followed by critical thinking. Fine art graduates were the most critical of skill development during their courses and had relatively low development scores for understanding client needs, technical skills, IT skills, self-confidence, problem solving, entrepreneurial skills, self-management, project management (all considered to be under-developed).

The most important skills for career development were considered to be self-confidence, self-management, creativity and innovation, presenting work and ideas, flexibility and adaptability, visual skills and problem solving. Fine art graduates were more likely than other graduates to find written communication, research skills and risk-taking/initiative important. They were less likely than others to place great importance on understanding client needs and technical skills (though these were still largely important skills to career development).

Areas in which there were differences between development and importance ratings were for written communication, collaborating with others, technical skills, problem solving and self-management – all highly rated by fine art graduates in terms of importance for career development, but generally considered to be underdeveloped on courses.

**Figure 5.5: Skill development during undergraduate studies and importance of these skills to career development - fine art graduates (mean score)<sup>#</sup>**



Note: <sup>#</sup> where 1=not at all, 2=not very, 3=fairly, and 4=very

Base: All respondents from fine art undergraduate courses

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A9/A10.4*

### Applied arts and crafts graduates

Applied arts and crafts graduates (see Figure 5.6) considered that the core creative areas of presenting work, creativity/innovation, visual skills and making/technical skills were generally both well-developed and important.

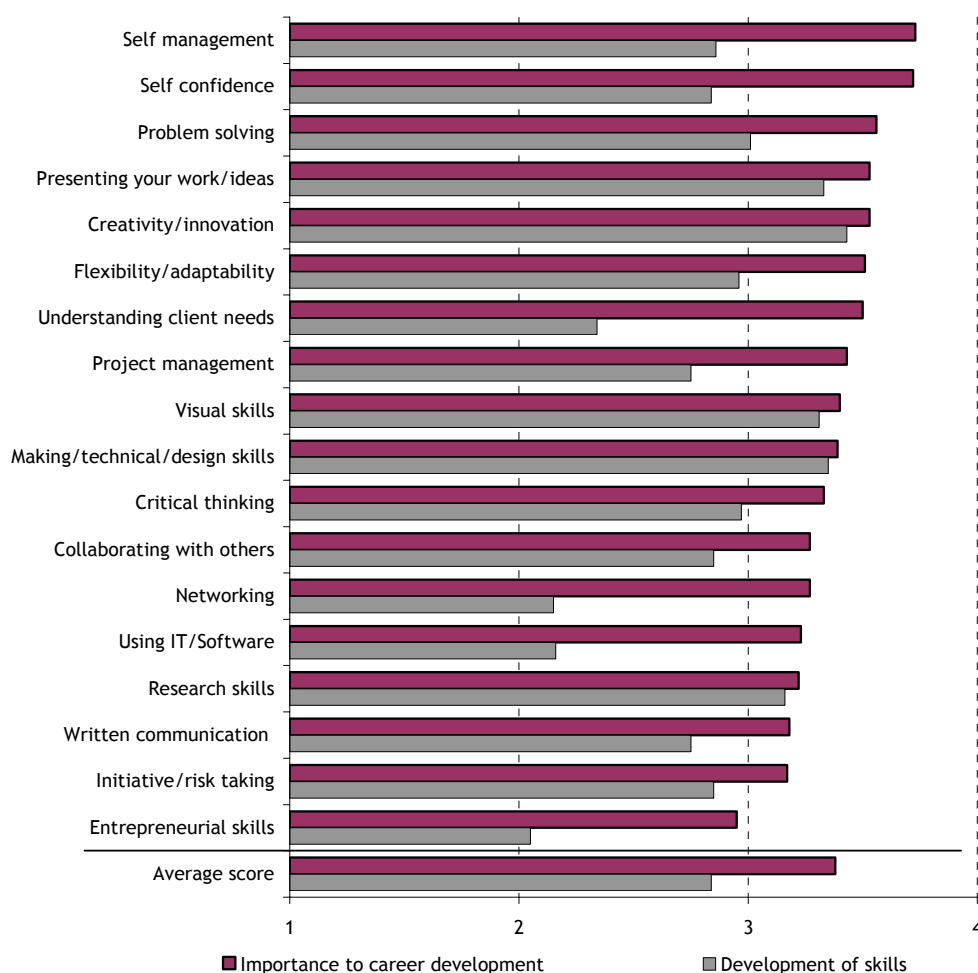
Across all the subject groups, applied arts and crafts graduates were most positive about the development of making/technical/design skills. Indeed, technical skills appeared to be the second most highly developed skill (behind creativity and innovation). This may reflect the strong emphasis on materials, making, and workshop practice on these courses. Problem-solving, too, appeared to have a greater prominence than other skills – coming sixth in the top 10 of skills developed on the course (whereas for most graduates it did not appear in the top ten). Applied arts and crafts graduates were relatively more critical than

others about the development of IT skills, self-confidence, entrepreneurial skills, networking, project management, and particularly understanding client needs (which they tended to feel was not well developed).

The most important skills to applied arts and crafts graduates were self-management, self-confidence, problem-solving, presenting work and ideas, creativity and innovation and flexibility/adaptability. These graduates were relatively less likely than others to find written communication, collaboration with others and IT skills important in their careers to date.

Exploring the differences between development and importance in careers indicates a mismatch for self-management, self-confidence, flexibility/adaptability, understanding client needs, and project management. These were all highly rated skills by applied artists in terms of importance for their career development but were generally considered to be underdeveloped during their courses. IT skills and networking were also areas of concern.

**Figure 5.6: Skill development during undergraduate studies and importance of these skills to career development - applied arts and crafts graduates (mean score)<sup>#</sup>**



Note: <sup>#</sup> where 1=not at all, 2=not very, 3=fairly, and 4=very

Base: All respondents from applied arts and crafts undergraduate courses

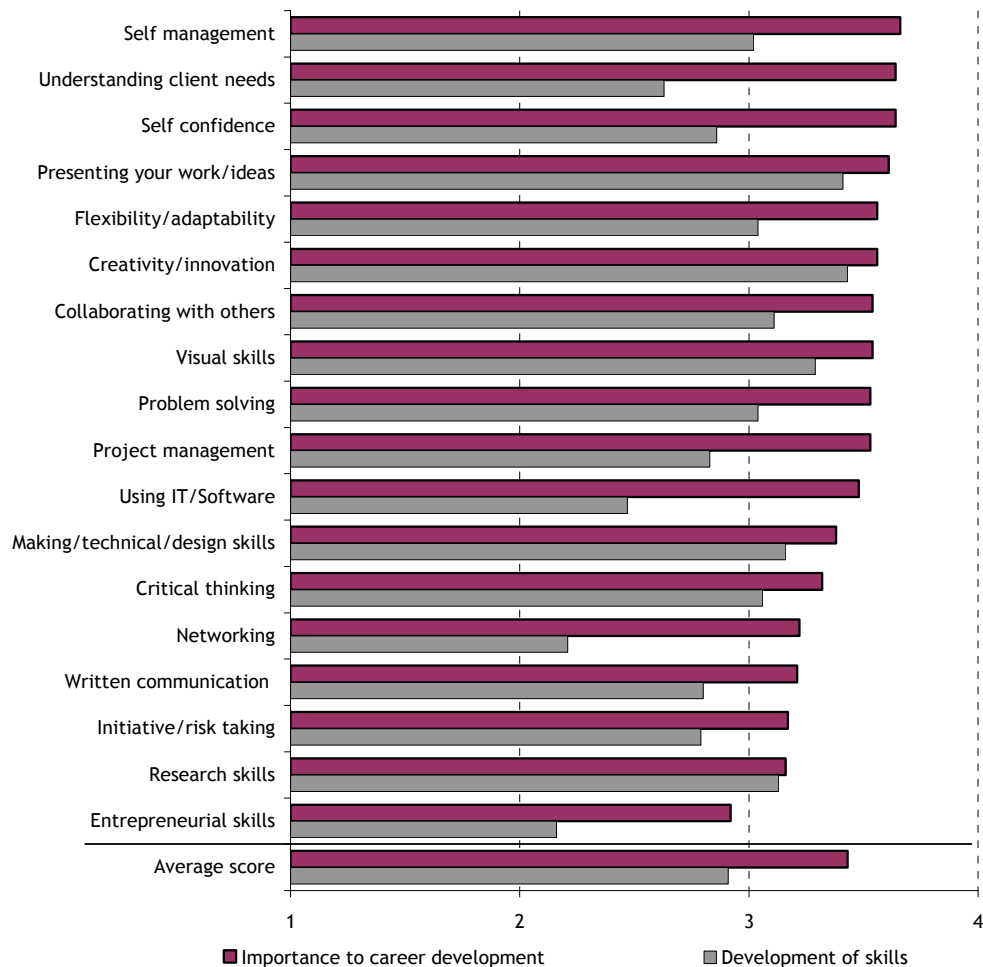
Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A9/A10.5*



### 3-D design graduates

3-D design graduates (see Figure 5.7) felt their skills in presenting work, creativity/innovation, visual skills, making/technical skills and to some extent collaboration with others were both well developed and important.

**Figure 5.7: Skill development during undergraduate studies and importance of these skills to career development - 3-D design graduates (mean score)<sup>#</sup>**



Note: <sup>#</sup> where 1=not at all, 2=not very, 3=fairly, and 4=very

Base: All respondents from 3-D design undergraduate courses

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A9/A10.6*

They were relatively more positive than other subject groups about presenting work/ideas, problem-solving, making/technical skills and understanding client needs (although the latter was considered under-developed). 3-D design graduates were more critical than others of the on-course development of initiative/risk taking and self-confidence.

The most important skills to 3-D designers were self-management, understanding client needs, self-confidence, presenting work, flexibility/adaptability, creativity/innovation, collaborating with others, visual skills, problem solving and project management. Indeed, they were more likely than other graduates to find understanding client needs (the second

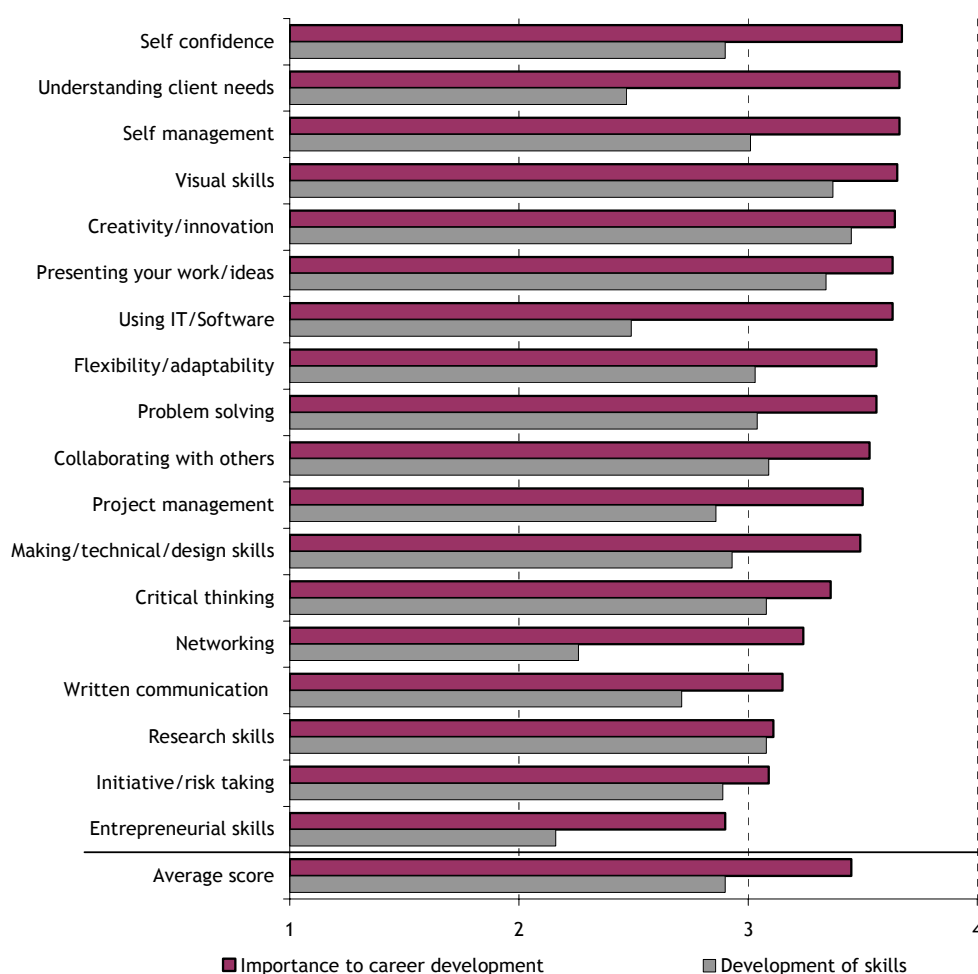
most important skill, equal in importance to self-management) and presenting ideas as important, but they were less likely to find networking important to career development.

Differences between ratings for development and importance in careers indicate a mismatch for understanding client needs, self-confidence, project management and IT skills. These were all highly rated skills in terms of importance, but were generally considered to be underdeveloped on courses. Research skills were considered to be well developed, but of second lowest importance.

### Graphic design graduates

Graphic design graduates (see Figure 5.8) had well-developed visual skills, creativity/innovation and presenting work which were all felt to be important to career development. Their visual skills were better developed than many others (second only to creativity and innovation). These graduates were more positive than others about problem solving.

**Figure 5.8: Skill development during undergraduate studies and importance of these skills to career development - graphic design graduates (mean score)<sup>#</sup>**



Note: <sup>#</sup> where 1=not at all, 2=not very, 3=fairly, and 4=very

Base: All respondents from graphic design undergraduate courses

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A9/A10.7*

The most important skills to graphic design graduates were self-confidence, understanding client needs, self-management, visual skills, creativity/innovation, presenting work, IT skills, and flexibility/adaptability, followed by problem solving and collaboration with others. Visual skills and IT skills were relatively more important than to graduates of other disciplines. However, of relatively less importance to graphic design graduates were research skills, and risk-taking/initiative.

Exploring the differences between ratings for development and importance in careers indicates a mismatch for self-confidence, understanding client needs, and project management. Again, these were all highly rated skills in terms of importance but were generally considered to be underdeveloped. For these graduates the development of IT and technical skills was a particular area of concern (considered important by graphic design graduates but under-developed). This is echoed in suggestions for improvements to courses later in this chapter.

### Fashion design graduates

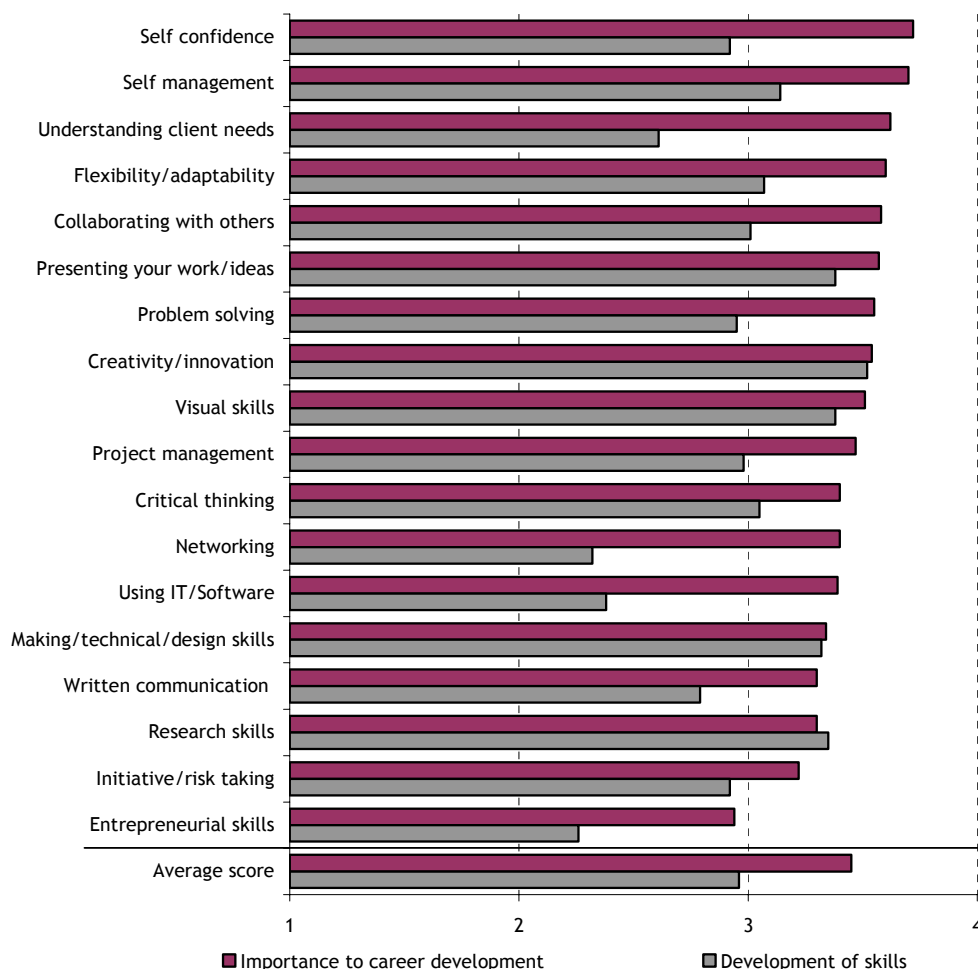
Fashion design graduates (see Figure 5.9) had well developed skills in presenting ideas, creativity/innovation and visual skills, all of which were regarded as important to careers.

Fashion design graduates tended to be generally more positive than other graduates about skill development particularly in relation to creativity/innovation, research skills, technical skills, self-management, flexibility/adaptability; and also understanding client needs, entrepreneurial skills, networking and project management (although all were generally regarded as under-developed). As with fine art and graphic design graduates, visual skills appeared to be relatively more developed than for other subjects (second only to creativity and innovation).

Looking at importance of skills to careers, the most important skills to fashion design graduates were self-confidence, self-management, understanding client needs, flexibility/adaptability, collaborating with others, presenting work, problem solving, creativity/innovation and visual skills. Indeed, collaboration with others, networking and research skills were more important to fashion design graduates.

Exploring the differences between development and importance in careers indicates a mismatch for self-confidence, understanding client needs, problem solving, project management, IT skills and networking. Again, these were all highly rated in terms of importance for career development but were generally considered to be underdeveloped on courses.

**Figure 5.9: Skill development during undergraduate studies and importance of these skills to career development - fashion design graduates (mean score)<sup>#</sup>**



Note: <sup>#</sup> where 1=not at all, 2=not very, 3=fairly, and 4=very

Base: All respondents from fashion design undergraduate courses

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A9/A10.8*

### Media production and electronic design graduates

Media production and electronic design graduates (see Figure 5.10) considered that skills relating to successful creative practice: collaboration, creativity/ innovation, presenting work and visual skills, were both well developed and important.

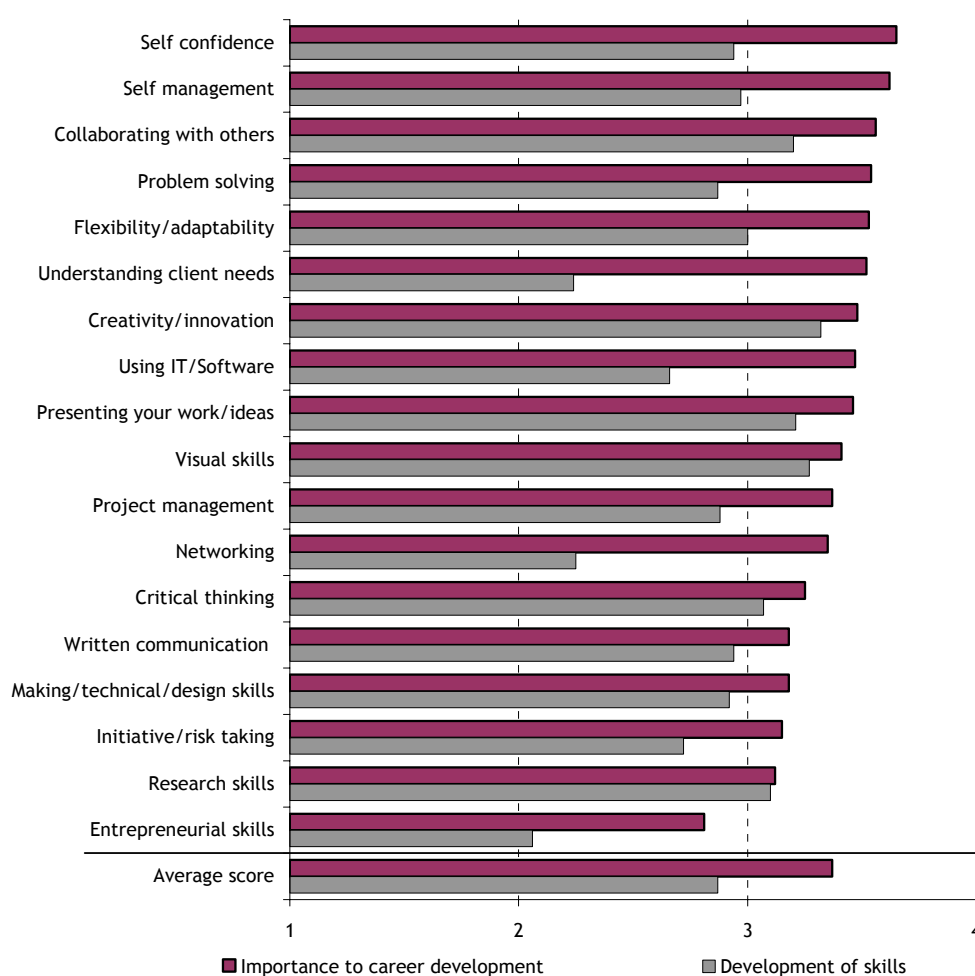
They were relatively more positive about the development of skills in collaborating with others and written communication and more critical about initiative/risk taking and problem solving. For these graduates, collaboration with others appeared to be relatively more developed than many other skills – coming fourth in the top 10 of skills developed.

The most important skills to media production graduates were self-confidence, self-management, collaboration with others, problem solving, flexibility/adaptability, and understanding client needs. Indeed, media production graduates found collaboration with others relatively more important than graduates from most other disciplines (third

most important skill behind self-confidence and self-management). Relatively less important to this group were presenting work/ideas and technical skills.

Differences between ratings for development and importance in careers indicates a mismatch for self-confidence, self-management, problem-solving, IT skills and, particularly, understanding client needs – all highly important skills for career development but generally considered to be underdeveloped during courses.

**Figure 5.10: Skill development during undergraduate studies and importance of these skills to career development - media production, and electronic design graduates (mean score)<sup>#</sup>**



Note: <sup>#</sup> where 1=not at all, 2=not very, 3=fairly, and 4=very

Base: All respondents from media production, and electronic design undergraduate courses

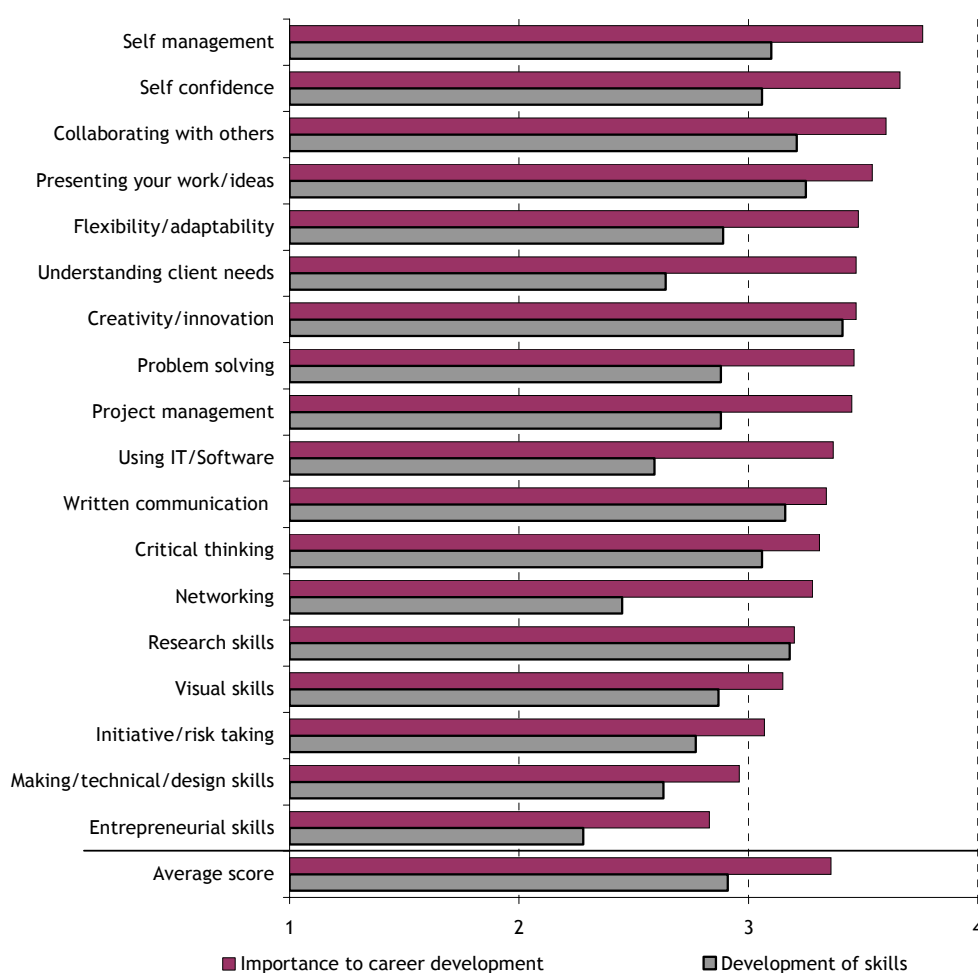
Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A9/A10.9*

### Inter-disciplinary art and design graduates

Inter-disciplinary art and design graduates (see Figure 5.11) had well-developed skills in creativity/innovation, presenting their work, collaborating with others and research skills which were also considered to be important. Collaborating with others was more important to this group than to others, both in terms of development and importance.

Written communication was better developed than for most other subject groups, except fine art. Flexibility/adaptability, problem-solving and project management were less developed compared with importance for career development. Areas of concern were networking, IT skills, understanding client needs, self-management and self-confidence which were important for all groups, but were less well developed.

**Figure 5.11: Skill development during undergraduate studies and importance of these skills to career development - other visual or inter-disciplinary art graduates (mean score)<sup>#</sup>**



Note: where 1=not at all, 2=not very, 3=not very, and 4=very

Base: All respondents from other inter-disciplinary arts and design undergraduate courses

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A9/A10.9*

### 5.4.3 Other career relevant skills

After rating development and importance to careers of 18 skill areas, graduates had the opportunity to note any other career-relevant skills that they felt their courses had not provided but would have been useful. These further suggestions tended to focus either on course-based activities to develop skills or on areas of skill development (see Tables 5.3 and 5.4).

**Table 5.3: Further suggestions for course-based activity to develop skills (in descending order of frequency)**

Area	Suggestions
Business/enterprise	Business start up skills/self-employment/freelance knowledge Entrepreneurial skills/marketing Quoting/pricing/budgeting jobs Funding/proposals Sales/influencing skills/negotiation Professional practice advice/support Copyright and intellectual property
Careers education and guidance	Careers education/pathways/information/options/links to companies Job hunting strategies/applying for/finding jobs Presentation/interviewing/the art of promotion skills Career development skills Info on working abroad
Work experience	Work experience/placement requirement/more opportunities
Context/critical studies	Specific course content-related issues (eg history of art) Ethical/environmental issues
Live project work	Work on real projects/companies/knowledge of industry pressures/time restraints.
Collaboration	More interaction/links with other courses/student collaboration
Teaching	Tutors with industry knowledge; more tutor contact and improved feedback
Other	Facilities, exhibitions, exchanges.

Note: suggestions are in descending order of frequency

Key: ☒ mentioned by more than a quarter of respondents

☐ mentioned by 10-25 per cent of respondents

☐ mentioned by fewer than 10 per cent of respondents

Base: those giving any free text responses to Q11 'Are there any career relevant skills the course did not provide that you would have found useful? What are they?'

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A11.2*

**Table 5.4: Further suggestions for areas of skill development (in descending order of frequency)**

Area	Suggestions
Using IT/software	Specialist IT/software skills (CAD etc.) Web design/how to present yourself on internet General/Office based IT/software teaching/skills (specific packages: Office/Adobe, InDesign etc.) Knowledge of emerging technologies
Technical skills	Specific technical skills Specific practical skills/knowledge (fabrics, printing issues, CMYK)
Networking skills	Building and using contacts/networks
Industry insight	Industry knowledge/information/projects about working environment/how industry works Information/support from recent graduates/experts to discuss experiences Applying work commercially
Presenting work	Portfolio management/presentation/CV presentation
Understanding clients	Client relationships/needs Writing briefs
Self-management	Management skills and training in self-management
Written communication	Dissertation writing and links/writing skills Communication skills
Other skills	Better balance of skills, research skills, teaching skills

Note: suggestions are in descending order of frequency

Key: ☒ mentioned by more than a quarter of respondents

☐ mentioned by 10-25 per cent of respondents

☐ mentioned by fewer than 10 per cent of respondents

Base: those giving any free text responses to Q11 'Are there any career relevant skills the course did not provide that you would have found useful? What are they?'

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, Table App. A11.3.*

### Mentioned by more than a quarter of respondents

**Support and advice for business and enterprise** was the most commonly desired aspect for attention. This is particularly interesting given the relatively low importance score for entrepreneurial skills, the low recognition of business and enterprise activities and the relatively low take up of business support after graduation. Clearly there is a discrete group of graduates that require this form of support and feel they are not getting it. These could include graduates from earlier cohorts and from fine art and applied arts and crafts courses as they were the most likely to mention these areas for further development.



More specifically, graduates most often mentioned self-employment skills such as practical information on tax returns and copyright, budget management, how to price and sell their work and general information about working freelance. Other business skills looked for were marketing and particularly self-promotion, influencing skills and negotiation, along with networking, skills around how to find work and how to meet the needs of clients. This is indicated by the 'shopping list' of one graduate:

*'Writing funding proposals, sending and presenting your work to film festivals, general marketing/promoting, being aware of available networks.'*

**IT and industry standard specialist software** was most commonly considered to be missing from courses, and related to employer expectations, ranging from: understanding how to use general office-based software; making better use of the internet including how to present yourself online; and specialist skills for computer-aided design such as Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign and Quark. These specialist skills were particularly important to 3-D design and to graphic design graduates. Some graduates noted that they had received teaching in these areas but felt this didn't cover in sufficient depth the skills they would require in the workplace. One suggestion was to make workshops in software packages compulsory, although graduates often recognised the resource constraints of having up-to-date software and facilities to deliver appropriate learning, but still felt that courses could be improved particularly with hands-on teaching and structured classes:

*'Every job I applied for after my degree required Photoshop and Illustrator - we should have been taught this as a major part of the course.'*

*'I think there should have been compulsory workshops in Photoshop and Illustrator (at least in the first year) as these are integral to most careers in art and design and the importance should have been stressed. I felt lost with only having basic Photoshop skills upon leaving and felt it held me back from getting a job.'*

**Careers education and guidance** was of interest to graduates of fine art and applied arts and crafts who were more likely than others to make this suggestion. More specifically the type of support called for included help on options/pathways and links to companies, job hunting and how to find and apply for jobs, information on working abroad and general career development support. Many felt under-prepared for life after graduation and did not have a sense of the range of roles that would make use of the creative skills they had developed during their course.

*'I felt there was a huge gap in preparing the students for jobs within the industry. Once I left I had no idea what to do next or who to turn to.'*

### **Mentioned by 10-25 per cent of respondents**

Work experience, technical skills and live project work were cited as an areas needing additional support (see Chapter 4). Graphic design graduates were more likely than others to make these suggestions.

### **Mentioned by fewer than 10 per cent of respondents**

A small minority of respondents mentioned presenting work and ideas (the art of promotion), networking and industry insight. The latter includes a need for better

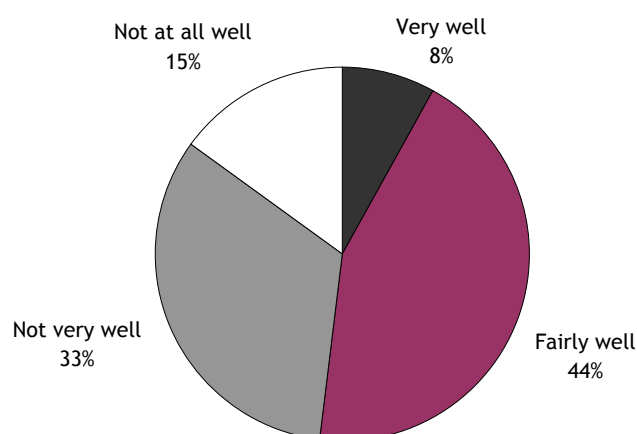
knowledge and information about industry and how it works, opportunities to take part in industry-related projects, support from recent graduates and industry experts, and skills in applying work commercially. Other areas of attention for courses have already been discussed in Chapter 4.

## 5.5 How well does a creative education prepare graduates for work?

Preparation for the transition from HE to work continues to be an important concern since D&R, and is expressed in our study by graduate feedback on their higher education experiences and skill development. Confidence in self and work, awareness of opportunities and how to access them, networking, IT and client-facing skills have all been demonstrated to be areas of concern.

At the heart of CGCF is the relationship between creative higher education and subsequent work and those aspects of the HE experience that may contribute to a graduate's capacity to choose and pursue an appropriate career path. Graduates were asked how well they felt that their course had prepared them for the world of work and they were equally divided in their opinions. Just over half of respondents felt that their undergraduate course had prepared them for the world of work fairly or very well (52 per cent) and almost the same number felt that when they finished their studies, they were not very well prepared or not at all prepared (48 per cent) (Figure 5.12).

**Figure 5.12: Perceptions as to how well the course prepared graduates for the world of work**



Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses, N=3,424

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A14.1*

### Perceptions of different groups about how well they were prepared for work

**Age:** Older graduates were more positive about their courses and how well it prepared them for work (58 per cent of those in their 30s felt very or fairly well prepared). However, this group are likely to need less preparation as they will have had experience of working, and they were also the most positive about the skills developed during their

undergraduate study. The least positive were those in their late 20s (50 per cent felt very/fairly well prepared, see Table App. A14.1).

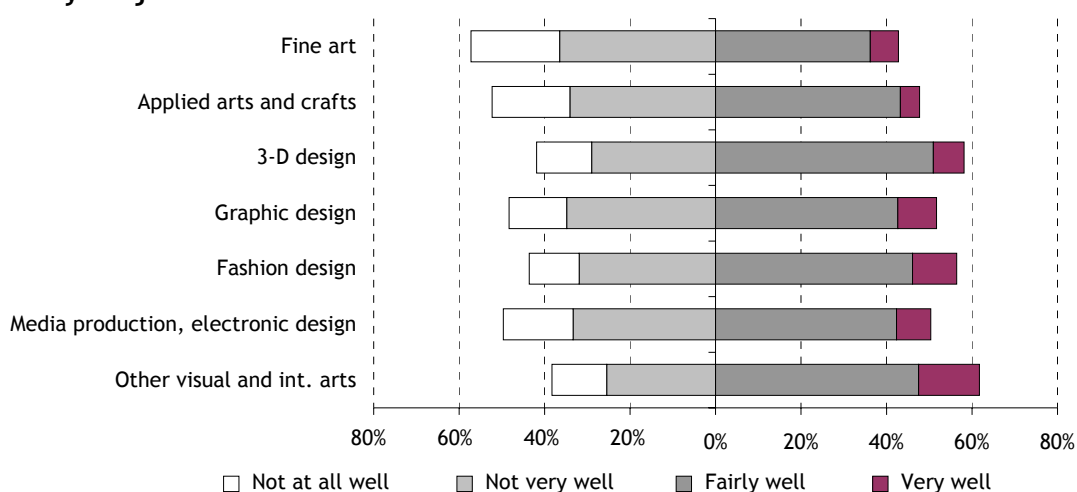
**Domicile:** Home graduates were least positive about preparedness, almost half (49 per cent) felt not at all/not very well prepared compared to 40 per cent of EU graduates. Again, as noted earlier, graduates from the EU were generally more positive about skill development on courses than home students (see Table App. A14.1).

**Disability:** Those with dyslexia felt least well prepared of all graduates (only five per cent felt very well prepared and 54 per cent felt not at all/not very prepared, see Table App. A14.1). This largely reflects their lower rating for skill development during undergraduate study.

**Study characteristics:** There was no difference in perceived preparedness for work across cohorts, indicating little change in the effectiveness of courses over time. However, graduates who were more successful academically tended to feel better prepared than those with lower class degrees. Those obtaining a first class degree were best prepared of all graduates (15 per cent felt very well prepared compared with four per cent of those with third/pass degrees). Again it was graduates with first class degrees who were most positive about skill development on course (see Table App. A14.2).

**Subject of study:** Figure 5.13 shows that graduates of other visual and interdisciplinary arts graduates felt most prepared by their courses (62 per cent very or fairly well prepared), as did fashion design (56 per cent) and 3-D design (58 per cent). Fine art and applied arts and crafts graduates were relatively less well-prepared for the world of work – indeed more felt unprepared than felt prepared (see Table App. A14.2). As noted earlier, fine art graduates were least positive, compared to graduates of other disciplines, about the development of many skills on their course – whereas graduates of fashion design were the most positive.

**Figure 5.13: Perception as to how well the course prepared graduates for the world of work by subject**



Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses, N=3,424

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A14.2*

**Differences by current work situation:** Generally, those who had achieved work in creative occupations and creative industries were more likely to feel their course had prepared them for the world of work than those working in other non creative roles and sectors (although there is no difference in perceptions about readiness for work between those self-employed and those working as an employee, see Table 5.5 and also Table App. A14.3).

Respondents' feelings about how well a range of skills were developed on their courses appeared to be a strong indicator of perceived preparedness for the world of work – those considering skills were fairly or well-developed tended to feel better prepared for the labour market at the end of their course.

**Table 5.5: Perception as to how well the course prepared graduates for the world of work - by current activities (%)**

	Not at all well	Not very well	Fairly well	Very well	Base (N)	Mean score <sup>#</sup>
All those in work	12.9	33.2	44.7	9.2	2,624	2.50
Currently self-employed in any job?						
No	13.2	33.1	44.5	9.2	1,359	2.50
Yes	12.6	33.4	44.8	9.2	1,265	2.51
Currently working in a creative occupation?						
No	13.8	36.9	41.2	8.1	556	2.44*
Yes	12.8	32.2	45.5	9.5	1,945	2.52*
Currently working in a creative industry?						
No	13.8	35.7	41.7	8.7	549	2.45
Yes	12.6	32.5	45.5	9.4	1,796	2.52

Note: <sup>#</sup> where 1=not at all, 2=not very, 3=fairly, and 4=very. The higher the mean score the more prepared

Note: \*indicates statistically significant difference

Base: All respondents from undergraduate courses, currently in work

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. A14.3*

## 5.6 Summary

- Many of the skills and attributes required for working in creative employment, such as problem-solving, independence, innovation, enterprise and collaborative working are embedded within the creative learning process, together with more tacit skills such as resourcefulness and handling ambiguity.
- Overall, creative graduates felt satisfied with the level of skills development they had experienced on their courses, rating most highly core creative skills such as creativity and innovation, visual skills and presentation of self and work, all of which they felt to be very important career skills.

- Self-confidence and self-management were considered to be the most important to careers, yet they were felt to be less well-developed than core creative skills.
- In the creative sector, skills shortages have been identified in client-facing skills, project management, business skills and IT/software, and graduates taking part in our study have similar perceptions in regard to their own development needs both in preparation for work and after graduation.
- Entrepreneurial skills were the least developed and felt to be the least important for career development, which is surprising, given the high incidence of self-employment and business start up experienced by graduates. There were some marked differences in perceived skill development between subject groups.
- In comparison with D&R, graduates appeared to be more satisfied with skill development. Creativity/innovation and visual skills were valued highly in both studies, and the main differences were for presentation and team-working which had much improved scores in the present study. The greatest contrast was with initiative/risk taking – viewed as the most important skill area for career development in D&R, yet not so well developed or valued in this study.
- Just over half the graduates (52 per cent) felt their courses had prepared them fairly or very well for the world of work. However, respondents would have liked advice, guidance and a better insight into industry and the pressures and challenges they would face, with more focus on self-employment and having the level of professional skills required.
- The degree to which a range of skills were developed on courses appears to be a strong indicator of perceived preparedness for work, suggesting that a successful creative education equips individuals with the right mix of skills for creative work. Those considering their skills were well developed tended to feel better prepared for work at the end of their course.

## 6 Early career patterns

This chapter:

- explores the nature of creative graduates' careers
- presents the range of activities respondents have undertaken since graduation and at the time of the survey
- reviews how personal background, performance during their first degree and any subsequent studies relate to their career development
- looks at the extent to which the experiences they have had in their early careers have been creative - involving work in the creative industries and work related to their discipline
- examines the role of teaching and lecturing in creative graduates' careers
- compares the findings with *Destinations and Reflections*.

### 6.1 Creative career patterns

Ten years ago, D&R found that graduates entering the creative and cultural sector at first experienced difficulty in locating where they might fit in and their career paths tended to be complex during the first few years, often involving working in several jobs simultaneously (portfolio careers). The study found that on the whole, graduates were well-equipped, and indeed, expected a multi-faceted work situation with an evolving career progression. D&R pointed to six key features of art and design post-graduation activity:

*'Art and design graduates: tend to work in areas related to the discipline; tend not to be high earners; take time to establish a career; tend to work in small and medium enterprises; are heavily involved in self-employment; and have had little opportunity on their courses to develop some vital employability skills.'*

Blackwell and Harvey, 1999, p.127

At the time of D&R, the creative and cultural industries were emerging as an economic sector. Routes into jobs tended to be informal, and for many, finding work was to a large extent serendipitous. Jobs tended not to be advertised, and work was accessed via a combination of personal contacts, work experience, networking and speculative self-promotion.

D&R found that graduates were resourceful and persistent in finding work, and although they took time to establish a career, as time progressed they found work in areas related to their discipline and in more full-time and permanent employment.

Evidence of these attributes comes through in other studies of the time:

*‘The richness and diversity of the lives they make for themselves is the most powerful and compelling finding of our research.’*

Press and Cusworth, 1998

To what extent has the picture changed? Today, other sectors of the economy are behaving more like the creative sector in terms of recruitment patterns: organised rounds of graduate recruitment in advance of graduation are declining because employers find it hard to plan their recruitment needs.

In an economic recession, graduates in all subjects are facing fierce competition for fewer jobs and more impersonal recruitment methods. Increasingly they need to take the initiative to apply for work, using personal contacts, or recruitment agencies, and increasingly, they are finding work in smaller-sized enterprises.

The signs today are that graduates, more than ever before, need to be resourceful, maintain their confidence and motivation and take responsibility for constructing their own future scenarios, in the face of increased competition for jobs and high unemployment for graduates.

## 6.2 Portfolio working

Overall, CGCF findings are closely aligned with those in D&R and other studies, with almost half of our graduate respondents involved in multiple activities – more commonly known as portfolio working. Indeed, D&R recorded that 50 per cent of respondents operating their own businesses were also working freelance or on commissions.

The rise of the portfolio career is not confined to the creative and cultural sector, and is becoming an important feature of work in all sectors. In the contemporary workplace, the prevalence of short-term contracts and temporary work is the result of companies wanting to maintain a flexible workforce and reduce overheads in an increasingly competitive and fragile economy.

It is useful to consider Charles Handy’s definition of the work portfolio as *‘a way of describing how the different bits of work in our life fit together to form a balanced whole.’* Handy divides portfolio working into two forms of work activity which resonate with our respondents’ patterns of work, study and family life:

- **paid work** involving wage/salary work (employment) and fee work (for services such as freelance/self-employment)
- **free/unpaid work** involving home work (home and family), gift work (voluntary/community work) and study (formal or informal training and study)



This type of distinction is important for this study as we explore graduates' working lives, which typically combine work and non-work activities in different combinations. Do these represent a preferred way of working or are there other contributing factors?

### 6.3 The breadth of work activities

CGCF set out to explore the extent of graduates' economic activities and the nature and range of experiences contributing to their career development, such as further learning, involvement in creative practice, volunteering and unpaid work, unemployment and taking time out of the labour market. It is important to understand when reading the data that graduates may have simultaneously engaged in multiple activities, involving combinations of jobs and other paid work, further study, work of an unpaid nature and/or continuing to develop their practice in some way.

It should be noted that the term 'activities' is broader than 'jobs' as it includes making active preparation for future employment (creating a portfolio career), including development of creative practice, voluntary and unpaid work as graduates move into more permanent working and self-employment.

In this chapter, we present the sum of all experiences since graduation (**all activities**), which is juxtaposed with the picture at the time of the survey (**current activities**).

We have indicated where there are marked contrasts with D&R.

### 6.4 What have graduates done since graduating?

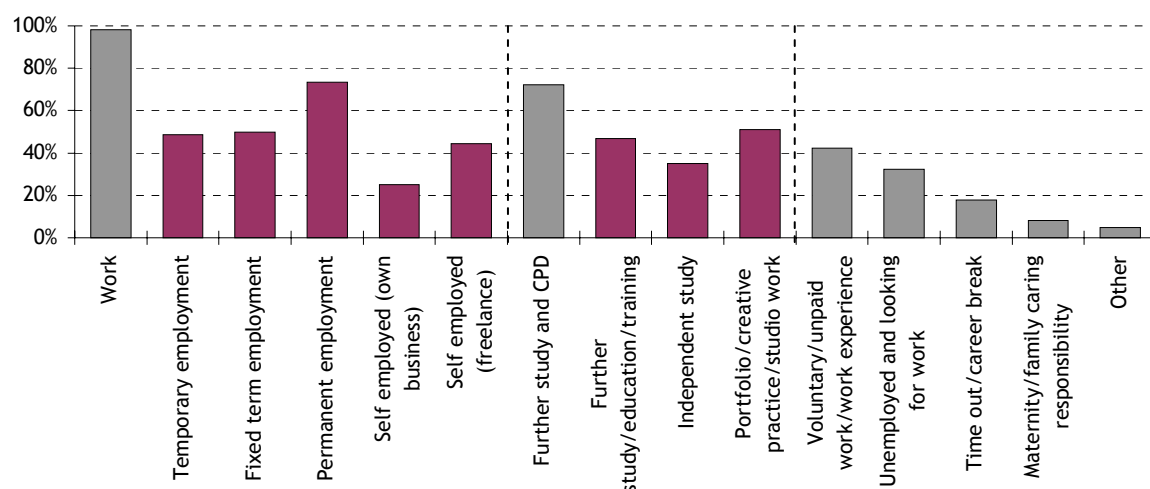
We asked graduates to record all activities since graduating (Figure 6.1) to present the full picture of experience and work. Almost all (98 per cent) had been employed at some point since graduating. Approximately three-quarters (74 per cent) of graduates had undertaken some form of permanent work since completing their undergraduate studies (compared with D&R's 70 per cent). Around half had experience of working on shorter-term contracts – either temporary contracts of less than three months (49 per cent) or fixed-term contracts lasting more than three months (50 per cent) (Table App. B1b.1).

Experience of self-employment was also relatively common and had increased since D&R, particularly in relation to business start up, with just under half working at some point on a commission or freelance basis (45 per cent: 38 per cent D&R) and around a quarter running their own business (25 per cent: 13 per cent D&R).

In terms of career development, almost three-quarters (72 per cent) had engaged in some form of further study or CPD, including 51 per cent who had spent some time since graduating developing their creative practice, doing studio work or developing a portfolio; 47 per cent who had engaged in formal study, education or training, and 35 per cent who had studied more informally at some time since graduating.

Thirty-two per cent reported that at some point in their graduate career to date they had been unemployed and looking for work, compared with D&R at 40 per cent. In addition a minority had taken time out of the labour market (18 per cent) or were looking after dependents (eight per cent).

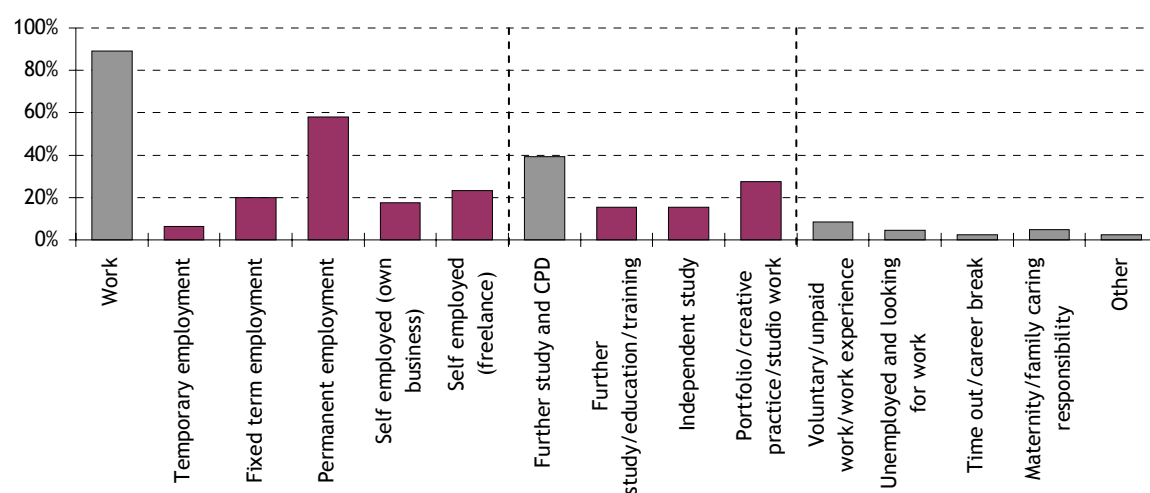


**Figure 6.1: All activities since graduating**

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Base: All respondents (answering the question), N=3,457

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. B1b.1*

**Figure 6.2: Current activities**

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Base: All respondents (answering the question), N=3,461

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. B1a.1*

Most graduates had experienced a range of work, study and other experiences during their careers, but some graduates appeared to have experienced a wider variety of activities – either by plan or through necessity.

Graduates with dyslexia engaged in a wider variety of activities than their non-disabled peers – arguably a group potentially disadvantaged in the labour market. Yet those whose parents had been to university were also more likely to have experienced more activities

than those from other backgrounds, as were those graduating with a first or an upper second class degree – groups which could be better placed in the labour market (see Tables App. B1b.2 and B1b.3).

Unsurprisingly, those who graduated earlier (in 2002) and, therefore, with longer time in the workplace, reported more activities than those graduating more recently (see Table App. B1b.3). Fine art graduates and applied arts and crafts graduates reported significantly more activities on average than graduates from other disciplines, whereas fashion design graduates experienced considerably less variety in their early careers (see Table App. B1b.3).

## 6.5 What are graduates doing now?

**At the time of the survey** (autumn 2008) graduates were still engaged in a variety of activities including combining paid work with further learning and/or other activities (Figure 6.2, also see Table App. B1a.1).

The great majority were undertaking some form of employment (89 per cent), yet 39 per cent of all respondents report involvement in further study at the same time, indicating that many were combining work with study. Three-fifths of graduates were in permanent work (58 per cent) and relatively few were in less stable work (temporary or fixed-term contracts, six per cent and 20 per cent respectively).

Self-employment was still an important form of working, with 18 per cent running a business and/or 23 per cent working freelance. Few were in unpaid or voluntary work (nine per cent) and fewer still were unemployed (five per cent).

Figures 6.1 and 6.2 demonstrate how significant a proportion of graduates are involved in self-employment, but that these same individuals are likely also to be involved in developing a portfolio and undertaking further study. Later tables will explore the relationship between these three features of creative graduates' careers.

## 6.6 How do their current activities compare with findings from other research?

### 6.6.1 Comparisons with destinations of leavers from higher education (DLHE)

In Table 6.1, we compare the 2003 DLHE cohort in creative arts and design with our own respondents from the 2003 cohort, as being reasonably comparable<sup>10</sup>, to illustrate the progression from the position immediately after graduation. CGCF graduates have a

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<sup>10</sup> Note: the figures for CGCF are derived from a question asking about all current activities – a multiple response question. In order to compare findings with data from the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey a hierarchy was created to create a single response variable where paid work was deemed to be the most valued work related activity if multiple activities were undertaken. Mode of work is inferred from subsequent questions. These figures are given in brackets as they should be treated with caution when making comparisons.

higher propensity to be involved in paid work than those reported in the DLHE survey (6 months after graduation) and are more likely to combine work and study, and much less likely to undertake further study as a single activity.

The complexities of engagement with further study are discussed in Chapter 8: Further Study.

Among our 2003 cohort of graduates, unemployment has settled at below two per cent. This compares with the DLHE longitudinal survey for the same period where art and design graduates recorded an unemployment rate of six per cent.

**Table 6.1: Current Activity of UK respondents graduating in 2003 compared to HESA destinations data for 2003 creative arts and design graduates (UK domiciled graduates only)**

<i>Interval since graduation</i>	CGCF Creative Graduates Creative Futures		DLHE Destinations of Leavers from HE	
	<i>+ 5 years</i>		<i>+ 6 months</i>	
<b>Current Activity</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Paid work only	707	80.5	11,800	65.4
Full-time paid work only (including self-employment)	(426)	(48.5)	9,440	52.3
Part-time paid work only	(114)	(13.0)	2,360	13.1
Paid work (hours unknown)	(167)	(19.0)	—	—
Voluntary/unpaid work only	6	0.7	200	1.1
Work and further study	112	12.8	1,105	6.1
Further study only	13	1.5	1,980	11.0
Unemployed	16	1.8	1,865	10.3
Not available for employment/other	24	2.5	840	4.7
<i>All known (N)</i>	<i>878</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>18,040</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Not known</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>n/a</i>		

Note: HESA DLHE survey point January 2004, CGCF survey point Sept-Dec 2008

Note: the HESA creative arts and design group roughly corresponds to our group of applied art, design, craft and media graduates.

Base: Full-time first degree UK domiciled graduates, 2003 cohort

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures*, IES, 2010, Table App. B1a.A, and HESA *Destinations of Leavers Survey Report 2002/03, 2004*

### 6.6.2 Comparisons with *Destinations and Reflections*

We also compare findings for all respondents to D&R and CGCF (Table 6.2) looking at graduates' **current activity** at the time of the survey. In both surveys, the question about activities was multiple response and therefore the sum was greater than 100 per cent. This data has been assembled as consistently as possible and is illustrative, rather than directly comparable<sup>11</sup>.

Overall, 72 per cent of CGCF respondents are in paid work of some kind (excluding self-employment), a slight increase since D&R. However, the proportion of individuals working full-time has fallen slightly (75 per cent for CGCF respondents when focusing on current main work activity) – but this change is likely to be caused by the inclusion of unpaid work into work activities in this calculation.

The change in part-time work is greater, an increase from 18 per cent to 25 per cent. Indeed across all work activities, 79 per cent of graduates in our CGCF study who were in work were working part-time (in at least one of their work-related activities) and this is a key finding of the study (see Table App. C7.4 and Chapter 7).

In CGCF, both fixed-term contract (20 per cent) and temporary working (six per cent) show some growth (see Table App. B1a.1) on the patterns found in D&R at the time of the survey (D&R Table 3.1, p14). This indicates that a higher proportion of employment is likely to be on fixed-term or temporary contracts, and is very likely a reflection on flexible and less stable working patterns as a result of fluctuations in supply and demand. The permanency of current working will be pursued in Stage 2 of the research.

The proportion of graduates running their own business has increased substantially (to 18 per cent), with a smaller increase in those working freelance (to 23 per cent) in the same period. This may reflect improved support for business start-up, and would be interesting to compare with start-ups data in the creative industries over a similar period.

Graduates are placing more importance on continuing with studio work or developing a portfolio<sup>12</sup> (rising to 27 per cent for CGCF) and this implies graduates' keen interest in refreshing their practice and producing new work. They may well see this as central to career development. It is interesting to note that equal proportions of CGCF graduates were engaged in formal study and in independent study.

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<sup>11</sup> New variables were derived in order to align categories with those used in D&R. Salaried/ waged employment is derived from any of: temporary employment, fixed-term employment, permanent employment, both full- and part-time employment, and other paid work. It does NOT include self-employment, which is shown separately. This is a re-calculated variable for this comparison table only.

<sup>12</sup> To some extent this may be caused by expanding the definition in CGCF to include creative practice.

**Table 6.2: Current activity of all respondents compared to the activities of graduates in the *Destinations and Reflections* study**

	Creative Graduates Creative Futures		Destinations & Reflections	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<b>Current Activity<sup>1</sup></b>				
Paid work (excludes self-employment)	2,482	71.7	1,328	70.8
Self-employment - freelance	811	23.4	373	19.9
Self-employment - own business	607	17.5	160	8.5
Further study or training	530	15.3	286	15.3
Independent study/informal learning	536	15.5	n/a	n/a
Work experience or voluntary	296	8.6	133	7.1
Portfolio and studio work	950	27.4	328	17.5
Parenthood/caring responsibility	165	4.8	110	5.9
Unemployed and looking for work	156	4.5	91	4.9
Unemployed and not looking for work	n/a	n/a	86	4.6
Time out/career break	79	2.3	n/a	n/a
Other activities <sup>2</sup>	78	2.3	70	3.7
<i>Base (N)</i>	<i>3,461</i>		<i>1,875</i>	
<b>Main job only<sup>3</sup></b>				
Full-time employment	1,957	75.3	1,080	81.3
Part-time employment	641	24.7	234	17.6
<i>Base (N)</i>	<i>2,598</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,314</i>	<i>100</i>

Note<sup>1</sup>: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Note<sup>2</sup>: in D&R there is no time out category, this is likely to be subsumed within other activities

Note<sup>3</sup>: full and part-time employment is shown for current main activity only - in CGCF this may include unpaid work but in D&R this only includes salaried/waged work

Base: all those responding to the question (all cohorts, all domiciles). CGCF survey point Sept-Dec 2008 (covers graduates from 2002,2003 & 2004). D&R survey point 1998 (covers graduates from 1993,1994,1995,& 1996).

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures*, IES, 2010, Tables App. B1a.B, B1a.1 and C7.1; and *Destinations and Reflections*, CRQ, 1999 Table 3.1, p14; and 5.1 p34

## 6.7 How do the experiences of graduates differ?

In this section we look at particular groups of graduates in more detail to understand the patterns in the variety of activities undertaken. We have noted where there are key differences only.

### 6.7.1 Differences by background characteristics

#### Gender

There were some differences noticed in the activities of men and women since graduating. Male graduates were more likely than females to have: had their own business, work freelance, spent time developing their portfolio or doing studio work, to have carried out independent study, or to have been unemployed and looking for work, at some stage since graduating.

Women on the other hand were more likely than men to have: engaged in further study, have undertaken unpaid or voluntary work, or to have taken time out for maternity or family caring responsibilities (see Table App. B1b.4).

**At the time of the survey** these patterns persisted, with one exception – women were no longer more willing than men to be in unpaid or voluntary work (see Table App. B1a.2).

#### Age

Generally speaking, older individuals (in their 30s or in their 40s and older) were more likely to have been self-employed (freelance or run own business), engaged in further study, studied independently, spent time developing their portfolio or doing studio work, and to have taken time out for maternity/family caring responsibilities.

Younger graduates (those in their 20s) were more likely to have been paid employees (in a temporary, fixed-term employment or a permanent job). They were also more likely to have been unemployed and looking for work, to have undertaken unpaid work experience or to have had time out or a career break; and this is perhaps to be expected because they were at an earlier stage in their careers (see Table App. B1b.5).

**At the time of the survey**, these patterns are replicated when focusing on the range of current activities, although graduates over the age of 40 were more likely to be engaged in voluntary/unpaid work than other graduates. Unemployment rates were lowest amongst those in their late 20s (see Table App. B1a.3).

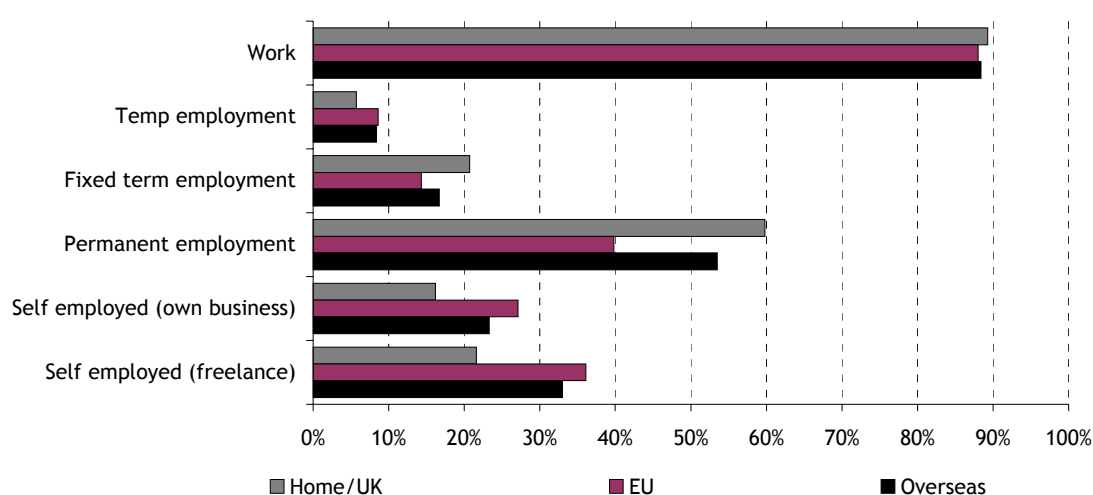
#### Student domicile

In terms of domicile or student status, UK graduates or those from overseas, were more likely to have had periods of permanent employment than EU graduates. UK domiciled graduates, however, were less likely than their EU and overseas counterparts to have had their own business at some stage since graduating or to have worked freelance (see Table App. B1b.6).

**At the time of the survey**, home and overseas graduates were still more likely than EU graduates to have permanent work, but at this point, home graduates were more likely than others to be working on a fixed-term contract (Figure 6.3). Overseas and particularly EU graduates were still more likely to be self-employed than home graduates.

It is interesting to note that at the time of the survey, the rate of unemployment for home graduates was almost half that of international (EU or overseas) graduates (four per cent compared to eight per cent, see Table App. B1a.4).

**Figure 6.3: Key differences in the current activities of graduates - a focus on domicile**



Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. B1a.4*

## Ethnicity

Ethnicity does not seem to have been a significant variable. However graduates from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were slightly less likely to have engaged in some form of further study or informal learning (when these types of activities are taken together) than graduates from white backgrounds (see Table App. B1b.8).

**At the time of the survey**, again there was very little difference here. The one exception is that graduates from black or minority ethnic backgrounds were slightly more likely to be unemployed and looking for work (seven per cent compared with four per cent, see Table App. B1a.6)

## Disability and dyslexia

Graduates reporting dyslexia or some other form of learning difficulty, disability, or mental health problem were more likely than non-disabled graduates to have engaged in further study, carried out portfolio or studio work, or to have worked voluntarily/unpaid at some stage since graduating. Graduates with a disability (including dyslexia) were also relatively less likely to have had periods of permanent employment than those not reporting a disability.

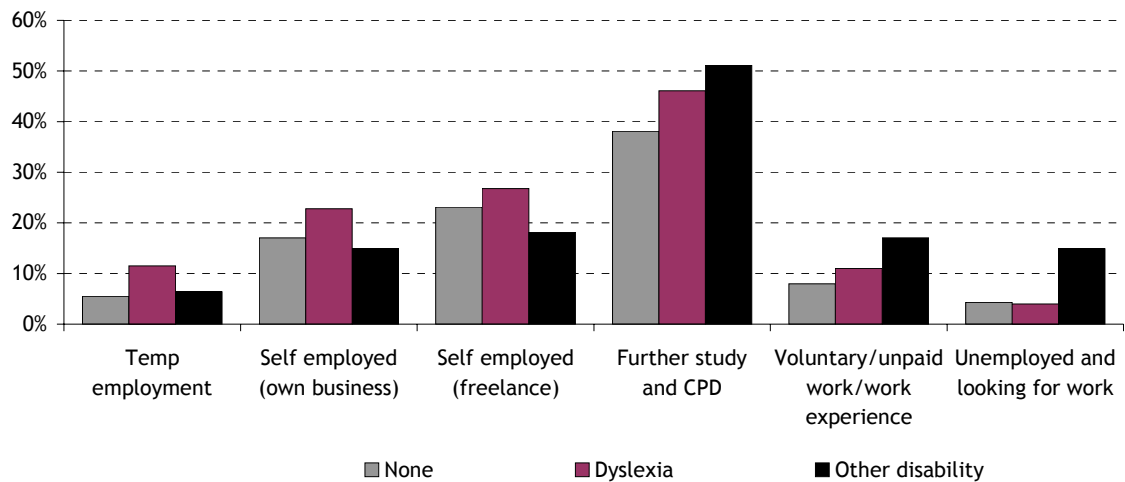
Graduates with a disability (other than dyslexia) were also relatively more likely to have taken time out either for a career break or because of family caring responsibilities.

Dyslexic graduates were more likely to have had temporary employment and they were also more likely to have been self-employed at some stage since graduation than those with no disability, with almost half indicating they had worked freelance (see Table App. B1b.7).

**At the time of the survey** (Figure 6.4), these patterns were still evident: graduates with dyslexia were still more likely to be doing temporary work (twice as likely as the average graduate), and those reporting some other form of disability were still less likely than on average to be in a permanent contract and were also considerably more likely than others to be unemployed.

Both disabled and dyslexic graduates were more likely than other graduates to be in unpaid work at the time of the survey, or to be engaging in some form of development. However at the time of the survey graduates with dyslexia were relatively more likely than others to be in some form of self-employment (see Table App. B1a.5).

**Figure 6.4: Key differences in the current activities of graduates - a focus on disability**



Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % may be greater than 100%

Base: all respondents (answering the question)

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Table App. B1a.5*

**Parental experience of HE**

Graduates whose parents had been to university were more likely than other graduates to have engaged in a variety of activities, such as: temporary working, freelance working, further study and informal learning, and voluntary/unpaid work or work experience. They were also more likely to have had periods of unemployment than were those who had no family experience of HE (see Table App. B1b.9).



**At the time of the survey**, graduates from more advantaged backgrounds (with a parent that had been to university) were still less likely to have permanent employment than on average, and were slightly more likely than graduates from other backgrounds to be self-employed, working unpaid/on a voluntary basis, or undertaking temporary work (see Table App. B1a.7).

### 6.7.2 Differences by study characteristics

#### Year of graduation

There was very little variation between year cohorts in the types of activities graduates had engaged in since graduation, although, those who completed earlier were more likely to have engaged in further study than those who finished more recently (see Table App. B1b.10).

**At the time of the survey**, those graduating more recently were slightly more likely to be unemployed and looking for work (see Table App. B1a.8).

#### Degree classification

Those graduating with a higher degree classification were more likely than those with a lower classification to have worked freelance, run their own business, or to have spent time doing studio work or developing their portfolio. These higher achievers however were also relatively less likely to have had a permanent job, or to have taken a career break (see Table App. B1b.11).

**At the time of the survey**, those graduating with a 3rd or a pass were more likely than on average to be engaged in independent study, and to be taking time out due to family caring responsibilities. They were less likely to be in fixed-term employment. In comparison, at the time of the survey, graduates with a first class degree were more likely than on average to be self-employed, either working freelance or with their own business, doing studio work or working on their portfolio. Graduates with an upper or lower second class degree were the groups most likely to be working on a permanent basis (see Table App. B1a.9)

#### Experience of work placement on courses

It is interesting to explore the relationship between course-related work placements and activities after graduating. Those with an on-course placement (whether embedded in the course or outside of the course requirement) had a marginal propensity for enhanced career opportunities, as they were more likely to have had permanent employment at some stage.

Those with no on-course placement experience were more likely to have had periods of fixed-term employment, to have participated in further study or independent study, or to be working on their portfolio/creative practice, and to have had periods of unemployment (see Table App. B1b.13).

It might be the case that those without work placement have had to find other ways of supplementing or gaining experience by further courses.

**At the time of the survey**, those working in a creative occupation were more likely to have had on-course placement experience and particularly to have organised their own extra placements, indicating that perhaps these graduates were more proactive in seeking relevant experience to gain entry into creative work (Table App. A7.8).

### 6.7.3 Differences between disciplines

Differences across disciplines were often quite marked. There was a significant variety in the experiences of graduates from different disciplines. It is worth looking at each of these groups in more detail.

#### Fine art

Fine art graduates were the most likely to have engaged in any type of continuing professional development – 87 per cent had done so at some point since graduating – either engaging in further study (63 per cent), independent study (50 per cent), or developing a portfolio (66 per cent) since graduating.

They were also more likely to have run their own business (30 per cent), and to have carried out voluntary/unpaid work (50 per cent). Along with media production and electronic design graduates, they were also more likely to have had temporary or fixed-term employment (52 and 54 per cent of fine art graduates). Indeed these two groups of graduates had relatively lower levels of permanent employment when compared to graduates of other disciplines (62 per cent of fine art graduates and 67 per cent of media production and electronic design graduates, see below).

Fine art graduates were also more likely to have been unemployed (37 per cent), or to have taken time out for family caring responsibilities (12 per cent) (see Table App. B1b.12).

**At the time of the survey**, fine artists (see Figure 6.5) were still more likely than others to be engaged in development activity of some kind (58 per cent, approximately twice as likely as design graduates – 3-D design, graphic design or fashion design), to be in less stable work (on temporary or fixed-term contracts, eight and 23 per cent) or working on a voluntary/unpaid basis (14 per cent), and correspondingly less likely to be in permanent employment (47 per cent).

They were also more likely to be taking time out for family caring responsibilities (eight per cent) or unemployed (six per cent) compared with graduates from other disciplines. They were relatively more likely than average to be self-employed – either running their own business or working freelance (21 and 29 per cent respectively) (see Table App. B1a.10).

Focusing on current activities and looking **within** the group of fine art graduates, men were more likely than women to be in fixed-term employment (31 compared to 21 per

cent) whereas women were more likely than men to be taking time out due to family caring responsibilities (ten compared to five per cent).

Graduates under the age of thirty were more likely to be working than those over the age of 30 (87 compared to 80 per cent, particularly fixed-term employment or permanent employment); however, they were less likely than their older peers to be self-employed and running their own business (17 compared to 29 per cent); and were also less likely to be taking time off for family caring responsibilities (five compared to 16 per cent) (see Table App. B1a.11).

### Applied arts and crafts

These graduates were more likely to have engaged in continuing professional development at some point since completing their undergraduate degree than on average (79 per cent, particularly formal study at 59 per cent, and/or developing their portfolio at 56 per cent). In this respect they are similar to fine art graduates. They were more likely than graduates of any other subject to have been self-employed in terms of running their own business (35 per cent), but were relatively less likely than others to have been working freelance at some stage (37 per cent) (see Table App. B1b.12).

**At the time of the survey** graduates of applied arts and crafts (see Figure 6.6) were still more likely than any other graduates to be running their own business (27 per cent, almost twice as likely as graduates from graphic design or fashion design courses) and were still more likely than average to be engaged in development activities (45 per cent). Very few at this stage in their career were taking time out (less than one per cent, the lowest across all disciplines) and this group had a lower proportion than on average who were unemployed and looking for work (three per cent) (see Table App. B1a.10)

Focusing on current activities and looking **within** the group of applied arts and crafts graduates, those under the age of thirty were more likely than those over thirty to be in permanent work (60 per cent compared to 38 per cent). Whereas, those who were at least thirty years old were more likely than younger graduates to be doing some form of development (60 per cent compared to 39 per cent), or voluntary work (14 per cent compared to five per cent) (see Table App. B1a.12).

### 3-D design

Graduates here were more likely to have had a permanent job than average (79 per cent) and were therefore less likely than other graduates to have had temporary work (44 per cent) or to have worked in a voluntary or unpaid job (36 per cent) at any point since graduating. 3-D design graduates were similar to other design graduates (either graphic design or fashion design) in that they had relatively lower levels of continuing professional development than found for other subjects (70 per cent), and relatively low levels of running their own businesses (25 per cent) (see Table App. B1b.12).

**At the time of the survey**, 3-D designers (see Figure 6.7) were still more likely than graduates of other disciplines to have a permanent job (64 per cent) and less likely to be doing unpaid/voluntary work (seven per cent) or to be engaged in further development

(34 per cent). At this point in their careers, this group had lower than average levels of unemployment (four per cent) (see Table App. B1a.10).

Focusing on current activities and looking **within** the group of 3-D design graduates, younger graduates (those under thirty) were more likely than those over thirty to be in fixed-term employment (21 per cent compared to 13 per cent) or permanent employment (69 per cent compared to 44 per cent), but were relatively less likely than older graduates to be self-employed with their own business, or working freelance (14 and 18 per cent compared to 34 and 28 per cent). They were also less likely than their older counterparts to be engaged in some form of CPD (31 per cent compared to 43 per cent), although this was mainly due to lower incidence of portfolio work. Younger 3-D graduates were also less likely to be unemployed and looking for work (three per cent compared to seven per cent), or to be taking time out due to family caring responsibilities (four per cent compared to 14 per cent) (see Table App. B1a.13).

Graduates with a disability were less likely than those with no reported disability to be in permanent employment (51 per cent compared to 66 per cent), but were relatively more likely to be in temporary employment (14 per cent compared to four per cent) or to be unemployed and looking for work (eight per cent compared to three per cent).

No significant differences in the current activities were noticed by ethnicity for 3-D design graduates, and very little variation by gender. However, women were relatively more likely to be taking time out due to family caring responsibilities (eight per cent compared to one per cent) (see Table App. B1a.13).

### Graphic design

Graduates from this discipline were more likely to have had a permanent job (80 per cent), and to have carried out freelance work (52 per cent) than graduates from any other discipline, and were also relatively more likely than others to have taken time out from the labour market during their early careers (20 per cent). However they were less likely than other graduates to have engaged in formal further study, education or training (38 per cent, and this is also indicated in Chapter 8 Further Study) (see Table App. B1b.12).

**At the time of the survey**, graphic designers (see Figure 6.8) were still more likely than average to have a permanent job (63 per cent) and to work freelance (26 per cent); and correspondingly were less likely than others to work on a temporary or fixed-term basis (four and 16 per cent respectively). At this stage, they were still less likely than any other graduates to be engaged in further (formal) study (11 per cent) and were less likely than average to be undertaking independent study (13 per cent) (see Table App. B1a.10).

Focusing on current activities and looking **within** the group of graphic design graduates, those younger than thirty were more likely to be in permanent employment than older graduates (65 per cent compared to 51 per cent). Older graduates were more likely to be self-employed with their own business (26 per cent compared to 13 per cent), carrying out voluntary or unpaid work (15 per cent compared to seven per cent), unemployed (nine per cent compared to four per cent), or taking time out for family caring responsibilities (nine per cent compared to two per cent).

Men were more likely than women to be doing independent study (18 per cent compared to nine per cent), and women were more likely than men to be taking time out to care for a family (four per cent compared to less than one per cent, though this is still a relatively low proportion compared to female graduates of some other disciplines). Graphic design graduates with a disability were slightly more likely to be taking time out to care for a family than were those with no disabilities (seven per cent compared to three per cent), and there were no significant variations in current activities by ethnicity for graphic design graduates (see Table App. B1a.14).

### Fashion design

Fashion design graduates were less likely than graduates from other disciplines to have engaged in further development (64 per cent) – either further study (42 per cent) or independent learning (25 per cent). Again this is indicated in Chapter 8. They were least likely to have run their own business (21 per cent) or to have experienced unemployment during their early careers (27 per cent).

They were also more likely than on average to have had permanent employment (77 per cent) and correspondingly relatively less likely to have had either temporary or fixed-term employment (both 45 per cent) or to have worked freelance (40 per cent) (see Table App. B1b.12).

**At the time of the survey**, fashion design graduates (see Figure 6.9) were still more likely than others to have a permanent job (64 per cent), and the least likely to be running their own business (15 per cent, alongside graphic design graduates) or working on a freelance basis (17 per cent), or to be engaged in development activity (further study 13 per cent, independent study 10 per cent, or portfolio work 19 per cent) or to be unemployed (three per cent) or in unpaid work (six per cent) (see Table App. B1a.10).

Focusing on current activities and looking **within** the group of fashion design graduates, those under thirty were more likely than older graduates to be in work (91 compared to 84 per cent), and in particular they were more likely to be on a permanent or fixed-term contract (67 and 20 per cent compared to 52 and 11 per cent). Older graduates were however relatively more likely to be self-employed (23 per cent compared to 13 and 16 per cent), engaged in independent study (16 per cent compared to nine per cent), unemployed and looking for work (seven compared to three per cent), or taking time out to care for a family (nine compared to four per cent).

Male graduates were more likely than their female counterparts to be self-employed with their own business (26 per cent compared to 14 per cent), to be working freelance (30 per cent compared to 16 per cent), or to be engaged in independent study (20 per cent compared to 10 per cent) or portfolio work (30 per cent compared to 18 per cent).

Fashion design graduates from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were less likely than white graduates to be in permanent work (56 per cent compared to 66 per cent) and were also more likely to be unemployed (six per cent compared to three per cent). Disabled graduates were more likely to be engaged in further (formal) study than those without a disability (24 per cent compared to 11 per cent) (see Table App. B1a.15).

### Media production and electronic design

As noted above these graduates, alongside fine art graduates, were less likely to have had permanent work (67 per cent) and were more likely than graduates from other disciplines to have experienced temporary or fixed-term work (55 and 58 per cent) or to have worked unpaid to gain experience (46 per cent) at some point since graduating. For this group, levels of self-employment were marginally above average (26 per cent running their own business at some point, and 47 per cent working freelance) (see Table App. B1b.12).

**At the time of the survey**, graduates of media production and electronic design (see Figure 6.10) were still among the least likely to have a permanent job (49 per cent) and were more likely than on average to be working on a temporary or a fixed-term basis (seven and 23 per cent). Again levels of self-employment were higher than average (19 per cent running their own business and 27 per cent working freelance). At this point in their careers they also had higher than average levels of unemployment (five per cent, second only to fine art graduates) (see Table App. B1a.10).

Focusing on current activities and looking **within** the group of media graduates, younger graduates were more likely to have a permanent, or fixed-term job, than were those over thirty (52 and 25 per cent compared to 35 and 15 per cent). However, they were relatively less likely to be self-employed with their own business (16 per cent compared to 33 per cent) or to be working freelance (25 per cent compared to 36 per cent). Older media graduates were more likely than their younger peers to be carrying out independent study (26 per cent compared to 15 per cent), voluntary work (17 per cent compared to seven per cent), or to be unemployed (ten per cent compared to four per cent).

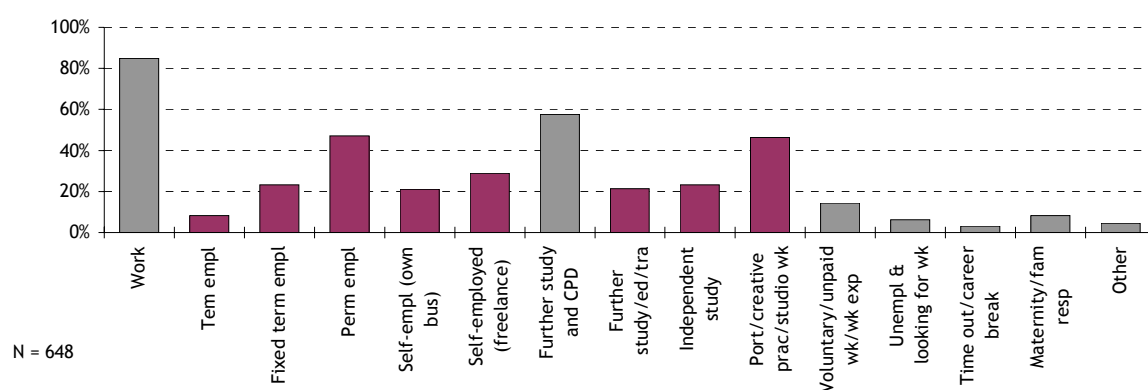
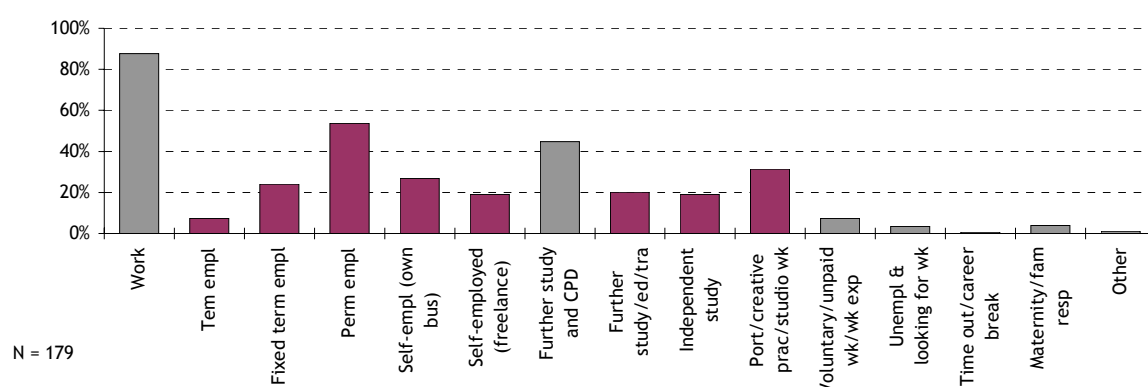
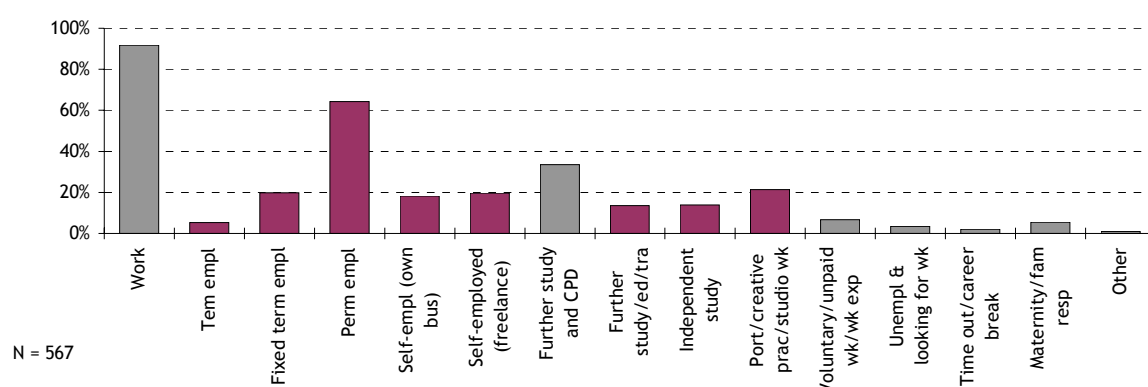
Other differences noticed within the cohort of media graduates were that men were more likely to report portfolio working than women (33 per cent compared to 22 per cent), graduates from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were more likely than white graduates to be taking a career break (seven per cent compared to two per cent), and graduates reporting a disability were more likely to be doing voluntary or unpaid work than were those without a disability (17 per cent compared to eight per cent) (see Table App. B1a.16).

### Other visual and interdisciplinary arts

These graduates were less likely than on average to have been self-employed at some point since graduating – either running their own business (21 per cent) or working freelance (41 per cent). They had lower than average levels of continuing professional development (69 per cent) largely due to the relatively small proportion who had worked on their portfolio or continued with their creative practice (36 per cent) which was lower than found for any other discipline. This group were also less likely than on average to have undertaken voluntary/unpaid work (38 per cent) (see Table App. B1b.12).

**At the time of the survey**, graduates from other visual or interdisciplinary arts subjects (see Figure 6.11) were the least likely to be running their own business (14 per cent), and still had lower than average levels of continuing professional development (36 per cent) due to low levels of portfolio working, creative practice or studio work (22 per cent) which are perhaps less relevant to this group of subjects (see Table App. B1a.10).

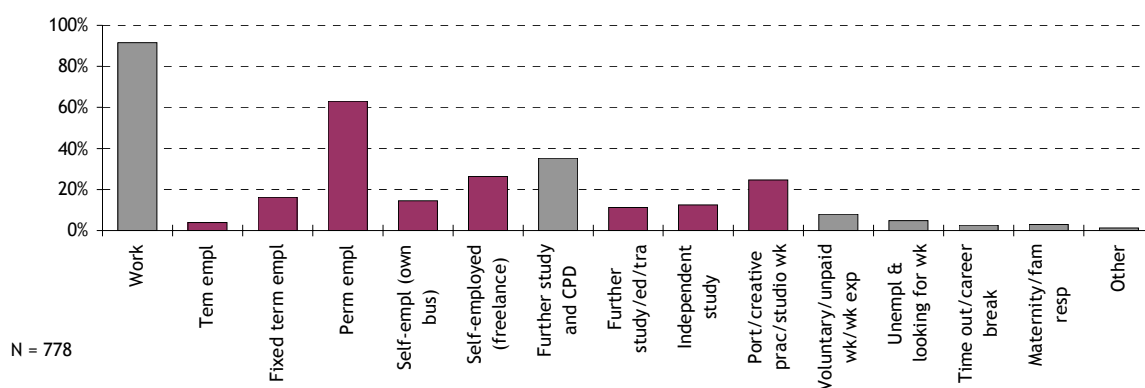
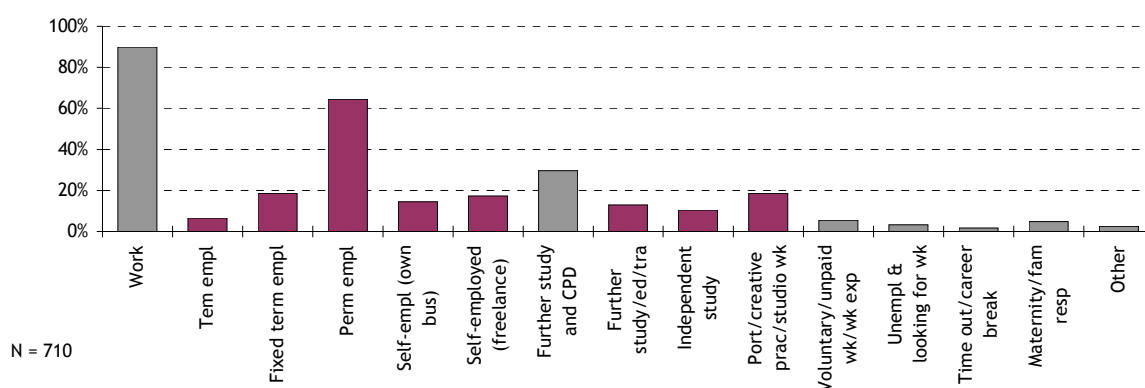
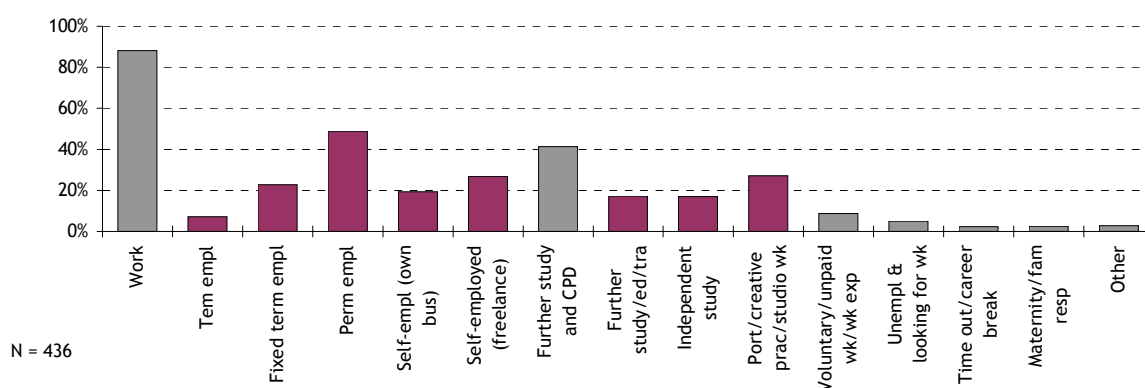


**Figure 6.5: Current activities of fine art graduates\*****Figure 6.6: Current activities of applied arts and crafts graduates\*****Figure 6.7: Current activities of 3-D design graduates\***

\*Base: All respondents (answering the question)

Note: Multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. Ba1.10*

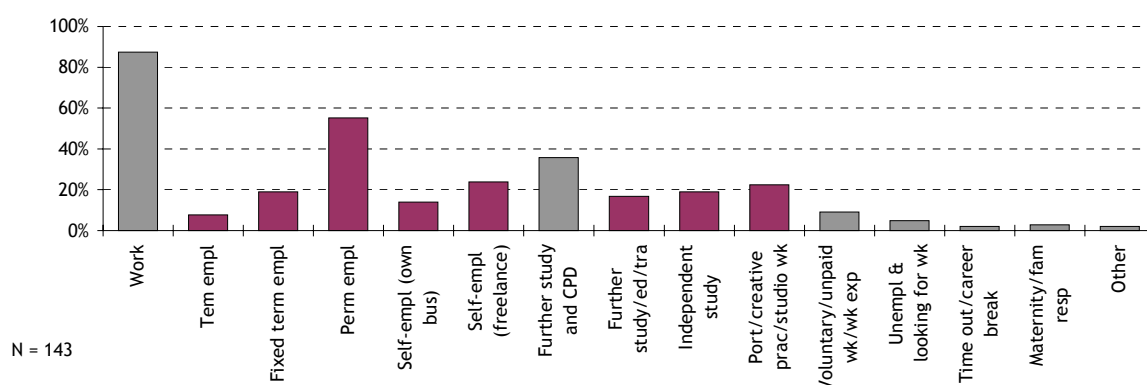
**Figure 6.8: Current activities of graphic design graduates\*****Figure 6.9: Current activities of fashion design graduates\*****Figure 6.10: Current activities of media production and electronic design graduates\***

\* Base: All respondents (answering the question)

Note: Multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. Ba1.10



**Figure 6.11: Current activities of other visual and interdisciplinary arts graduates**

Base: All respondents (answering the question)

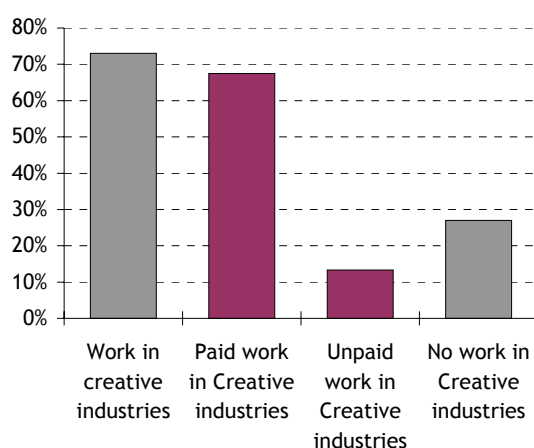
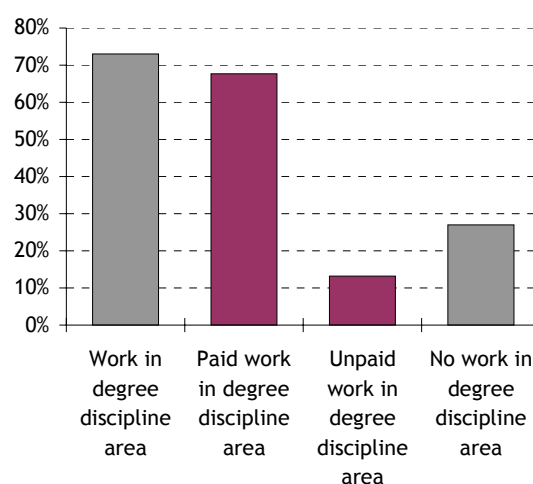
Note: Multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. Ba1.10*

## 6.8 To what extent has graduates' work been creative?

### 6.8.1 Working in the creative industries

Graduates were asked whether they had worked in the creative industries since graduating, whether any of their work since graduating was in an area directly related to their degree, and whether any of this was paid or unpaid (see Figures 6.12 and 6.13).

**Figure 6.12: Experience of working in the creative industries since graduating****Figure 6.13: Experience of work related to discipline since graduating**

Base: All respondents (answering the question), N=3,315

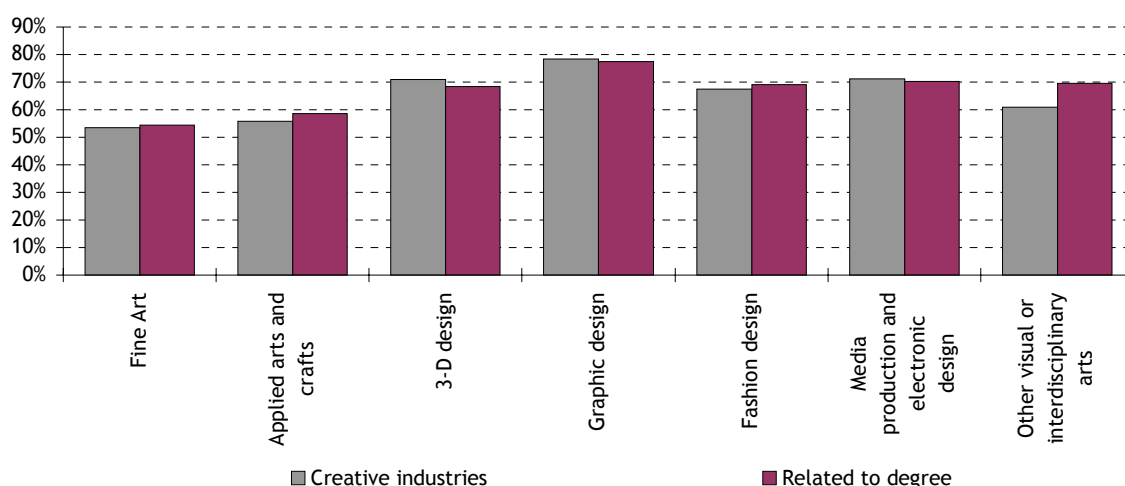
Notes: Multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. B3.1*

Approximately three-quarters of respondents had experience of working in the creative industries since graduating (73 per cent) and in their field of expertise (73 per cent), and this was generally paid work (68 per cent) rather than unpaid. Indeed, only a small group of graduates, one in eight, reported working in the creative industries in an unpaid role (13 per cent) (see Table App. B3.1), yet 42 per cent of graduates reported work of a voluntary or unpaid nature amongst all their activities since graduating (see Table App. B1b.1).

Those most likely to have had experience of paid working in the creative industries at some point since graduating were: men (74 per cent), younger graduates (72 per cent of those in late 20s), from wider EU or overseas backgrounds (77 and 78 per cent), and those with parental experience of HE (71 per cent, see Table App. B3.2). Graduates over 40 were much less likely to have done so.

**Figure 6.14: Experience of paid work in the creative industries since graduating by subject area of degree**



Base: All respondents (answering the question), N=3,315

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. B3.3*

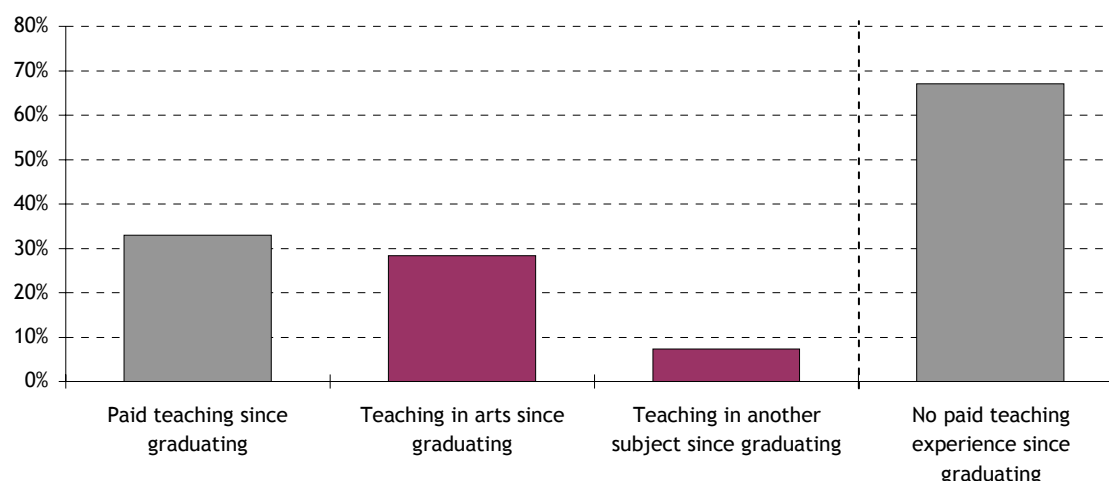
Those graduating with a higher degree classification (first or upper second) were more likely to have had paid work in the creative industries (78 and 70 per cent), whereas Figure 6.14 illustrates that graduates from fine art (54 per cent) and applied arts and crafts courses (56 per cent) were less likely to have had paid work in the creative industries in their early careers (see Table App. B3.3).

In the main, graduates working in the creative industries appear to do so in roles that closely relate to their degree discipline. It is important to note here, however, that graduates with a disability were less likely to have undertaken paid work that was relevant to their degree (54 per cent of those with a disability other than dyslexia). This corresponds with their greater likelihood of engaging in unpaid voluntary work and may suggest difficulties in establishing their early careers (see Tables App. B3.2 and B1a.5 and B1b.7).

### 6.8.2 Teaching and lecturing

Teaching is traditionally seen as a popular career destination for creative arts graduates. We asked our respondents to tell us if they have done any paid teaching or lecturing since graduating (see Figure 6.15).

**Figure 6.15: Experience of teaching since graduating**



Base: All respondents (answering the question), N=3,435

Notes: Multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

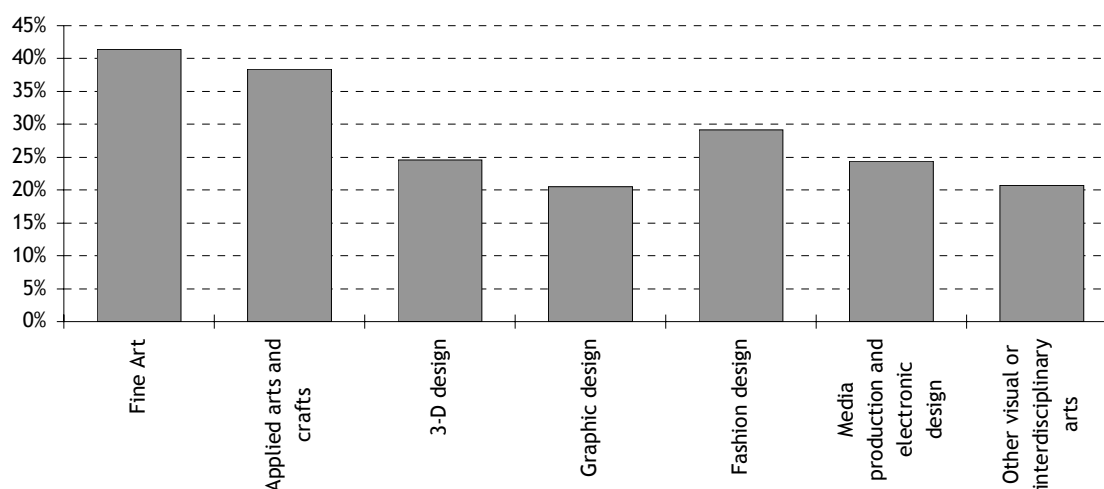
Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. B2.1*

Higher proportions were entering teaching since D&R, with one-third of our respondents (33 per cent) having taught since graduating (compared with 24 per cent D&R). In the main this was related to art, design, craft and media (28 per cent of respondents) rather than in another subject.

Women were relatively more likely to have worked as a teacher in creative art and design subject (29 per cent), as were older graduates (44 per cent of those 40 or older), those with dyslexia (36 per cent), and those from white backgrounds (29 per cent) (see Table App. B2.2).

Graduates with a higher degree classification were more likely to have worked as a creative art and design teacher at some point in their early careers (38 per cent) than those who were less successful in their studies. Figure 6.16 shows that graduates of fine art and applied arts and crafts were most likely to have worked as a teacher (41 and 38 per cent respectively) (see Table App. B2.3).

**At the time of the survey**, 328 graduates (13 per cent of respondents) were undertaking teaching of some kind as their main work activity (see Table App. C4.1). Over all their current work activities, 457 graduates were teaching (18 per cent, see Table App. C4.5) with at least half of these combining teaching with other work. Similarly, 15 per cent of graduates were working in the education sector in their main work activity (see Table App. C6.1). This represents an increase since D&R (11 per cent working in the sector).

**Figure 6.16: Experience of paid teaching in arts since graduating, by degree subject**

Base: All respondents (answering the question), N=3,435

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. B2.3*

Whilst one in ten graduates (338: 10 per cent, see Table App. D3.1) had studied for a teaching qualification (PGCE) since completing their undergraduate studies, it is interesting to note that 198 or 59 per cent of those who studied a PGCE were working as a teacher at the time of the survey (in any one of their work activities) and correspondingly, the remaining 41 per cent were not currently teaching, even though they had undertaken a PGCE. There are a number of possible reasons for this which warrant further investigation.

The majority of those teaching at the time of the survey recorded their job title as teacher and did not specify the level at which they were teaching. Only a small number (fewer than 30) specifically indicated that they were working at HE level – describing their roles as Lecturer, Tutor or Research Assistant. Fewer still specifically indicated that they were working in Secondary Schools or in Primary Schools.

It is interesting to note that of the 464 graduates (accounting for 13 per cent, see Table App. D3.1) who had studied at masters level, only 89 or approximately one-fifth were working as a teacher at the time of the survey (in any of their jobs/work activities). Teaching was not necessarily seen as a career preference for this group, and this is discussed later in Chapter 9 in relation to career goals. Those working in HE were very small in number (45), representing just under half of this group. They were working as Senior Lecturers, Lecturers, Tutors, Associate Lecturers, Visiting Tutors or Sessional Lecturers (less than two per cent of all respondents). So, although graduates were keen to study for a higher degree or a teaching qualification, they did not necessarily enter teaching, and it is interesting to look at motivating factors for further study (Chapter 8) which tells us that graduates did not necessarily see a masters degree as a stepping stone to an academic career.

## 6.9 Summary

### Employment and work

- Virtually all graduates had experienced work of some kind since graduating. Almost three-quarters had held a permanent job, and half had undertaken temporary work and fixed-term contracts at some point, indicating a less than stable employment situation. Graduates with formal work placements during their studies were more likely to have experienced permanent work. Permanent work was also more common amongst younger graduates, home graduates, non-disabled graduates, first generation HE entrants, those achieving a lower class of degree, and design graduates (from 3-D design, graphic design or fashion design disciplines).
- **At the time of the survey**, 89 per cent of the respondents were working (in any type of paid employment or self-employment) but less than two-thirds (58 per cent) were in permanent work. However, graduates over 40 years of age were still less likely to be in paid work (particularly when compared to those in their late 20s), as were graduates with a disability, and fine art graduates. There remains a greater likelihood of being in paid work amongst graduates of 3-D design, graphic design and fashion design courses.
- Four out of five graduates were working part-time in at least one of their work-related activities and this is an important key finding.

### Self-employment

- 45 per cent of graduates had experience of freelance work at some point during their careers – almost twice as many as had run their own business (25 per cent). Men, older graduates, dyslexic graduates and those with a higher class of degree were more likely to have had self-employment (of any type) at some point; but international students or those from fine art and applied arts and crafts courses were also relatively more likely to have run their own business, and those from a more advantaged background or from graphic design courses were more likely to have worked on a freelance basis.
- **At the time of the survey**, 23 per cent were still self-employed (working freelance), and 18 per cent were running a business.

### Further study

- Almost three-quarters of graduates had continued with some form of study or development during early careers (72 per cent), whether through creative practice, formal education or training, or less frequently via informal study.
- Older graduates and those from fine art courses were most likely to have worked to update/build on their skills since graduating. Formal study was most common amongst: female graduates, disabled graduates, those from more advantaged backgrounds, from earlier cohorts or applied arts and crafts courses.

- **At the time of the survey** (winter 2008), around two in five graduates were engaged in some form of further study or development, whether formal or informal, or via creative practice/portfolio work.
- Men were slightly more likely than women to be engaged in some kind of further study or development, as were graduates aged 40 or older, graduates with dyslexia or some other form of learning difficulty or disability.
- Graduates who did very well or relatively poorly in their studies (gaining a first class degree or a third class degree) were also relatively more likely than others to be engaged in some form of further learning activity. The type of learning undertaken by these two groups is likely to differ, and this is explored in more detail in Chapter 8.
- Graduates in fine art were the most likely to engage in further study (58 per cent). Graduates from media production and applied arts and crafts courses were more likely to be engaged in further learning than on average, while fashion design graduates were the least likely to be engaged in further learning at the time of the survey.

### Unpaid and voluntary work

- Forty per cent of graduates had undertaken voluntary or unpaid work or work experience since graduating. Those most likely to have done so were: women, graduates with disabilities, those from more advantaged backgrounds or from fine art courses.
- **At the time of the survey** this proportion had fallen, and only nine per cent were working in a voluntary or unpaid capacity.

### Unemployment

- Around thirty per cent of graduates had experienced a period of unemployment since graduating. This was more common amongst male graduates, younger graduates, those from more advantaged backgrounds, those from fine art courses and those with no formal work placement experience during their undergraduate studies.
- **At the time of the survey**, fewer than five per cent of respondents were unemployed and/or seeking work. Respondents who had not undertaken a work placement on their courses were still more likely to be unemployed (although this was no longer statistically significant), as were men, those under 25, EU and international graduates, disabled graduates, those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, those graduating more recently, and those who had not achieved so well academically. Fine artists were the most likely subject group to be unemployed at the time of the survey and fashion and textile designers the least likely.

### Creative work

- The great majority of graduates had experience of working in the creative industries since graduating, generally in paid roles and in roles relating to their degree discipline.

## Teaching and lecturing

- Those undertaking teaching have increased since D&R: overall, one third of graduates (33 per cent; 24 per cent D&R) had experience of teaching since graduating.
- **At the time of the survey**, 13 per cent compared to 11 per cent D&R) of respondents reported that teaching featured as one of their work activities.
- However, few appeared to enter an academic career, with fewer than 30 respondents (less than one per cent) indicating they were teaching at HE level, and interestingly this corresponds to a similar negligible proportion undertaking further study at doctorate level.

## Comparisons with *Destinations and Reflections*

- Patterns of career progression after graduation were broadly similar for both studies, except that a smaller proportion of CGCF respondents (32 per cent) had experienced unemployment since graduating (40 per cent D&R), more graduates had worked freelance (45 per cent from 38 per cent) and almost double the proportion of graduates had started a business (25 per cent from 13 per cent).
- **At the time of the survey**, again there were few differences between the studies, with the majority of graduates in creative work. Unemployment rates (1 in 20) and the incidence of work unrelated to subject of study (1 in 5) remain unchanged.
- **At the time of the survey**, greater proportions of graduates in CGCF were working part-time and on fixed-term and temporary contracts, which indicates less stable working patterns.
- This needs to be read in conjunction with more evidence of business start up (9 per cent to 18 per cent), the slight fall in full-time working, and growth across the creative industries sector of workers in micro-enterprises (with fewer than 10 employees, see Chapter 7).
- Graduates showed a keen interest in refreshing their practice (27 per cent from 18 per cent D&R).

## 7 Creative work and portfolio careers

This chapter:

- explores the context for the majority of graduates' working lives - the creative and cultural industries and their characteristics
- examines in greater detail the current employment and work-related activities of creative graduates, including paid and unpaid work, self-employment and working for others, and work-related activities such as volunteering or work related to creative practice such as studio work or preparing for an exhibition
- looks at the extent to which graduates undertake several work activities at the same time, and explores this further in relation to models of portfolio working
- reviews the kinds of jobs graduates do, taking account of the entirety of their work situation (all jobs); and also where these jobs are
- explores other aspects of graduates' working situation - the influence of location on likelihood of creative work, their earnings and their job satisfaction
- takes a more in-depth look at nature of the main reported work activity
- compares the findings with *Destinations and Reflections*.

### 7.1 Characteristics of work in the creative sector

This chapter presents some key findings in relation to the nature of creative careers, and discovers that portfolio working is an established way of working as careers progress rather than an interim career pattern, as there was no statistical difference in the likelihood of portfolio working across the cohorts when graduates are four, five or six years into their careers.

The majority of graduates taking part in our study have experienced high levels of engagement in creative work of some kind, with three out of four working in the creative industries and in their field of expertise since graduating. Around half our graduates engaging in multiple work activities (portfolio working) are typically combining employment and self-employment and continuing to develop their practice in some way.

This finding provokes questions about the ways in which work is organised in the sector, and how graduates engage with it, especially in the early stages of their careers.



Working patterns in the creative industries are characterised by a contract economy, and this is a key feature of portfolio working, in which workers often work on different projects simultaneously, combining income streams. This pattern is confirmed by the high level of part-time work in the sector, accounting for 27 per cent of the work force and growing at 10 times the rate of full-time work.<sup>13</sup>

The sector is made up of a large number of very small organisations and a small number of larger employers: with 87 per cent of businesses employing fewer than 10 people. This is a young and emerging economy, with a correspondingly young workforce (over half under 40) and high levels of business start-up.

Self-employment in the creative sector is growing faster than other forms of employment, accounting for two out of every five workers. This varies between the creative disciplines, with the highest proportions in performing and visual arts. This trend is supported by a recent study of fine artists and their careers which found that as many as 70 per cent of those working in the creative sector were self-employed (Bakshi et al., 2008).

These workers do not necessarily enjoy high pay levels, job security or good working conditions. Levels of earnings and the nature of self-employment are discussed further in this chapter.

*'Self-employed entrepreneurs and freelancers are the lifeblood of the creative industries. If government policy hopes to address the needs of the creative sector and create jobs, it must consider the needs of the self-employed.'*

Bright and Gunnell, 2009

All these factors contribute to the bigger picture of a sector that is emerging, evolving and often fragmented, relying heavily on freelance and contract workers (which is also seen as one of the strengths of the sector). There are concerns about sustainability in relation to growth and stability in a sector dominated by micro-enterprises as core business forms. Recent government proposals (DCMS, 2008) recognise this fragility and propose a range of supportive measures to encourage new entrants to the sector and mid-career workers. The key question for higher education is how graduates are being prepared for this kind of working – portfolio careers.

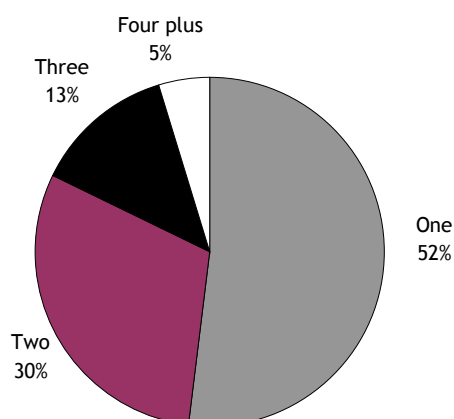
## 7.2 To what extent do graduates combine different work activities?

The great majority of CGCF graduates reported that they were in paid work at the time of the survey and most of these went on to describe this work and other related activities in greater detail – including the number of different work activities they were doing at the same time, the types of jobs they were doing, the type of contracts they were under, the hours worked, and also the size of organisations and the sectors worked in. They also gave feedback about how satisfied they were with their overall work situation, and recorded their gross annual personal income.

<sup>13</sup> Source: CCSkills (2009), *Creative and Cultural Industry Impact and Footprint* and for all other creative industries statistics in this section.

Indeed, just over three-quarters of all respondents gave these extra details about their working patterns (see Table App. C1.1). What is perhaps most interesting is that there is clear evidence of portfolio career patterns, with almost half (48 per cent), involved in more than one job or activity (Figure 7.1). So whilst 52 per cent had only one job or work activity, 30 per cent had two, 13 per cent had three and for a small proportion (one in twenty, five per cent) their work spanned at least four different types of activity (see Table App. C2.1).

**Figure 7.1: Number of work-related activities - identifying portfolio work**



Base: All those reporting work-related activities (and answering the question), N=2,663

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C2.1*

### 7.2.1 Who were most likely to undertake multiple activities?

In terms of the number of work-related activities reported, those who were more likely to be undertaking multiple activities or portfolio working were:

- male (51 per cent)
- older (60 per cent of those aged 40 or older reported multiple activities)
- EU or overseas graduates (58 and 57 per cent respectively)
- graduates with dyslexia (60 per cent)
- from more privileged backgrounds (51 per cent of those whose parents had been to university)
- graduates from fine art and from applied arts and crafts undergraduate courses (both were 60 per cent, see Tables App. C2.2 and C2.3).

There was no statistical difference in the likelihood of portfolio working across the cohorts – indicating that this does not change significantly over time – when graduates are four, five or six years into their careers. Nor were there any real differences when looking at class of degree.

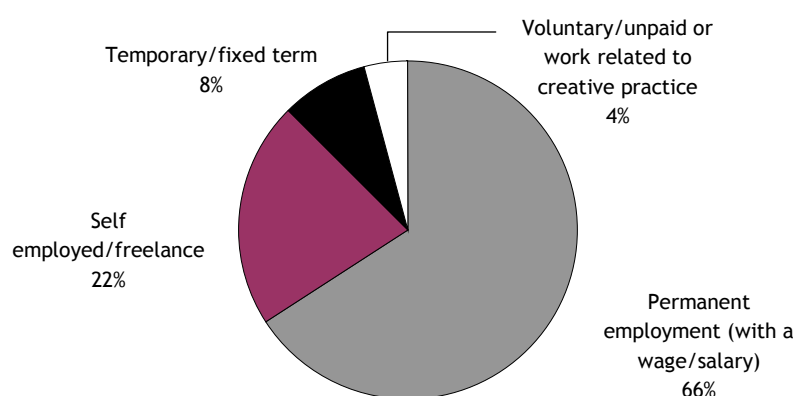
### 7.2.2 What combinations of work-related activity are most common?

It is interesting to explore how work activities are combined. The degree of portfolio working and how graduates record their multiple work activities indicates the extent of work-related activity that is missed by traditional surveys in which only one type of work or job is captured.

#### Those with only one activity

Just over half (52 percent of the total) reported one principal activity only, indicating that this group were not engaged in portfolio working (see Figure 7.2).

**Figure 7.2: Type of job - those in one job only (current job)**



Base: Those reporting just one work activity (answering the question), N=1,363

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C3.13*

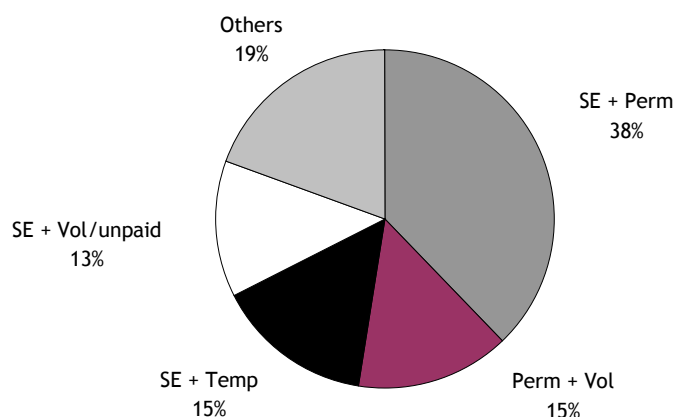
**Permanent work:** Two-thirds (66 per cent) were in a permanent job (with a wage or salary). Nearly all of these were working full-time (96 per cent).

**Self-employment:** Around one-fifth were self-employed (either their own business, or working on a freelance/ commission basis) and three-quarters of these were full-time workers.

**Unpaid work:** Very few were only in unpaid/voluntary work and it tended to be part-time (see Tables App. C13.1 and C13.2).

#### Those reporting two forms of activity

Thirty per cent of working graduates were portfolio workers, reporting involvement in two forms of activity at the same time (see Figure 7.3).

**Figure 7.3: Exploring combination of activities - those with two jobs (currently)**

Note: Perm (permanent paid work), SE (self employed/freelance/own business), Temp (paid temporary/fixed-term contract work), Vol (unpaid work/volunteering/work related to creative practice).

Base: All those reporting two work activities (answering the question), N=764

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C3.17*

**Permanent work:** Almost three out of five (58 per cent) of these portfolio workers (with two work activities) were combining paid permanent work with another activity, and generally graduates reported the permanent position first (as their main job). Most commonly permanent work was combined with self-employment (38 per cent), but about half as many combined permanent work with creative practice or voluntary work (15 per cent). Having two permanent jobs (two per cent) or combining a permanent job with a temporary job (three per cent) was relatively rare.

**Self-employment:** Almost three-quarters (74 per cent) were combining some form of self-employment with another activity, and graduates were evenly split as to whether their self-employment was recorded as their main job or as their second job (although when combined with permanent work, as noted above, it tended to be reported as the second activity). Self-employment was most commonly combined with permanent work (38 per cent) but about half as many combined it with temporary work (15 per cent) and a similar number combined it with creative practice or voluntary work (13 per cent). A relatively small group had two self-employed jobs (eight per cent).

**Temporary work:** Considerably fewer (22 per cent) were combining temporary work with another activity, and where this did occur it tended to be combined with self-employment (15 per cent).

**Unpaid work:** One-third of these graduates (34 per cent) were combining unpaid work related to their creative practice with another activity, and generally graduates reported this type of work as their second activity. Most commonly this voluntary work was combined with some form of permanent work (15 per cent) or with self-employment (13 per cent). Relatively few combined voluntary work with temporary work (four per cent) or had two unpaid jobs (two per cent, see Tables App. C3.16 and C3.17).

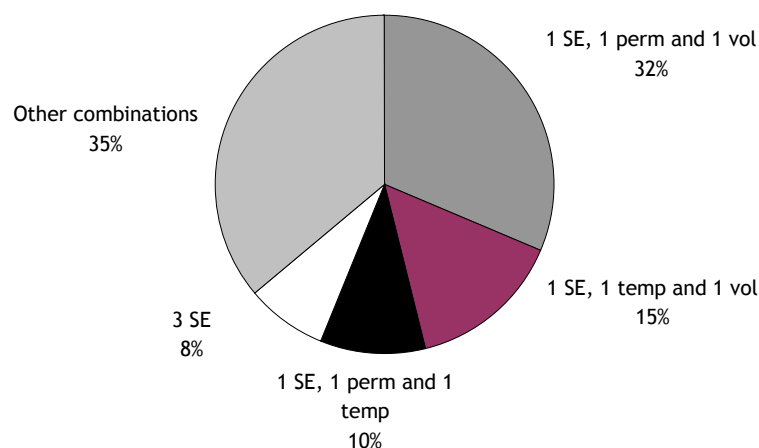
**Work combinations:** Across all those with two activities, the most common combinations were therefore: permanent work (main) combined with self-employment (28 per cent), permanent work (main) combined with unpaid work/volunteering/creative practice (15 per cent), self-employment (main) combined with unpaid work/volunteering/creative practice (12 per cent, see Table App. C3.16).

**Hours of work:** In most cases (66 per cent) it was a case of combining a full-time job or work-related activity with another part-time job or activity. Working two part-time jobs was also relatively common, with more than a quarter (28 per cent) working in this way (see Table App. C7.7).

### Those with more complex forms of portfolio working

Of graduates reporting details of three jobs or work-related activities, 13 per cent of the total had three activities with a further five per cent indicating involvement in four or more (see Figure 7.4).

**Figure 7.4: Exploring combinations of activities - those with three or more jobs (currently)**



Note: Perm (permanent paid work), SE (self employed/freelance/own business), Temp (paid temporary/fixed-term contract work), Vol (unpaid work/volunteering/work related to creative practice).

Base: All those reporting three work activities (answering the question), N=317

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App.C3.20*

It is worth noting that, for portfolio workers, reporting the same type of activity across their two or three jobs was rare. The exception, however, is with self-employment. In general for these graduates, portfolio working was about mixing different types of activities. It is also interesting to note the prevalence of self-employment in portfolio working (that was not found when graduates were working in only one job) – suggesting that self-employment is key to portfolio work whether through choice or by design.

**Permanent work:** Almost three-fifths (58 per cent) of these more complex portfolio workers were combining paid permanent work with other activities. Most commonly

permanent work was combined with self-employment and with creative practice or voluntary work (32 per cent) generally with the permanent job recorded first.

**Self-employment:** Almost nine in ten (86 per cent) were combining self-employment with other activities, most commonly (as noted above) with permanent work and with creative practice or voluntary work (32 per cent). However, respondents frequently combined self-employment with temporary work and with voluntary work (15 per cent); or combined it with both permanent and temporary work (ten per cent); or indeed reported three different self-employed activities (eight per cent).

**Unpaid work:** More than two-thirds (67 per cent) of graduates with three or more jobs were combining unpaid work related to their creative practice with other activities. Voluntary work was most commonly combined with permanent work and with self-employment (32 per cent, and voluntary work was generally recorded last). Combining volunteering with self-employment and temporary work was not uncommon (15 per cent); as was combining it with two different self-employed activities (seven per cent, see Table App. C3.20).

**Work combinations:** Across all those with three jobs, the most common combinations were:

- permanent work (main) combined with self-employment (job 2) and volunteering (job 3, 18 per cent)
- self-employment (main) combined with temporary work (job2) and volunteering (job 3, eight per cent)
- three types of self-employment (eight per cent)
- and self-employment (main) combined with permanent work (job 2) and volunteering (job 3, seven per cent, see Table App. C3.19).

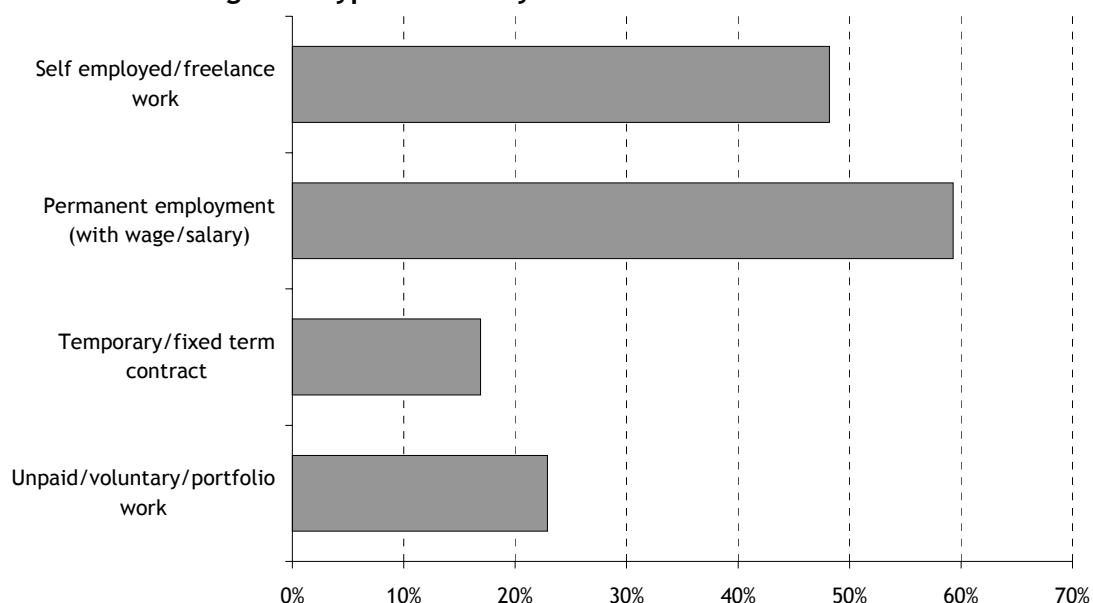
**Hours of work:** for the three activities, 48 per cent were combining one full-time job with two part-time jobs. However, working in three part-time jobs was also relatively common (40 per cent). It was relatively rare for those reporting three jobs to be doing three full-time activities (only six per cent, see Table App. C7.9).

### 7.3 What kinds of work do graduates do?

Graduates were asked to describe the title of each of their work activities. For those with more than three jobs at the time of the survey, they were asked to report details of the three they spent most time on. This creates a powerful set of data describing the full array of work activities that creative graduates undertake at any one time and takes account of portfolio working.

It is worth noting that these work activities can sometimes overlap, indicating the degree of portfolio working, but this can make it somewhat confusing to describe in aggregate. It is therefore possible to either focus on the nature of what graduates do across all their activities (which can overlap) or to focus on the nature of work activities undertaken by graduates (see Figure 7.5).

**Figure 7.5: Type of current work activity (across all activities) - proportion of graduates undertaking each type of activity**



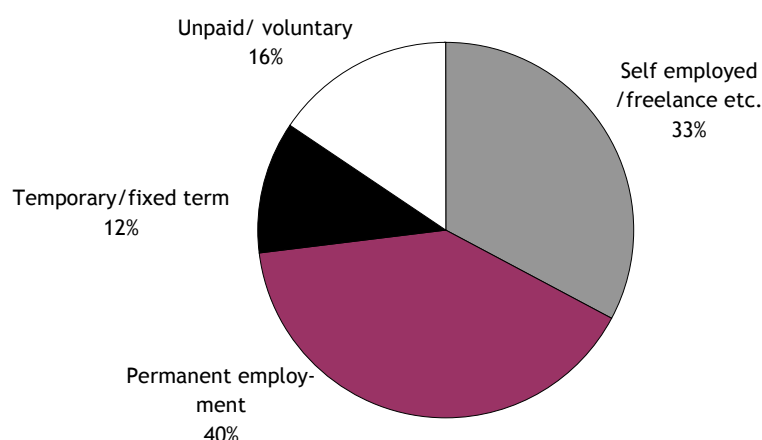
Notes: Multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Base: All those reporting work-related activities (excludes 'don't knows and missing values), N=2,663

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Table App. C3.6*

At the time of the survey, across all types of work activity, three out of five graduates in work (59 per cent) were in permanent paid work. Almost half (48 per cent) of the graduates in work were self-employed or freelance (this includes working on commission and/or running their own business). Seventeen per cent were in somewhat less stable paid work (on a temporary or fixed-term contract), and almost a quarter (23 per cent) were in unpaid/voluntary roles or undertaking unpaid work related to their creative practice (Figure 7.5, see Table App. C3.6).

**Figure 7.6: Type of current work activity (across all activities) - proportion of activities reported**



Base: All work-related activities reported, N=3,923

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C3.6*



**Work activities:** If we look at the distribution of all current activities in terms of the way these are undertaken, of all the jobs described: two-fifths (40 per cent) were permanent jobs, one-third (33 per cent) were classed as self-employment/freelance, 16 per cent were unpaid work/creative practice, and approximately one-tenth were on a temporary or fixed-term basis (12 per cent, Figure 7.6, see Table App. C3.6). Self-employment and unpaid work deserve further discussion below.

**Hours of work:** Around four out of five (83 per cent) of all those describing their work had at least one full-time job, and a similar proportion (79 per cent) described at least one job as part-time (see Table App. C7.4). This suggests that there is considerable overlap between full-time and part-time working with many of those describing more than one activity combining full-time work with another part-time activity. Just over half of all the jobs/activities described were full-time (51 per cent) and just under half (49 per cent) were part-time (see Table App. C7.4).

**Size of organisation:** Around one-third (34 per cent) of jobs/activities described were solo activities, with just over half (55 per cent) working alone in at least one job or work-related activity (see Table App. C8.5). However, a quarter (24 per cent) of graduates were at the time of the survey working in an organisation with more than 250 other employees. Most current working activity, across all jobs, was either solo working or working alongside 10 or fewer employees.

### 7.3.1 Self-employment

Across all higher education subject disciplines, graduates from the broad spectrum of creative subjects have the highest proportion going into self-employment after graduation, and this appears to be rising year on year. Taking our 2003 cohort as an example, data six months after graduation shows that creative arts and design graduates were four times more likely to be self-employed after graduation (eight per cent) than graduates in all subjects (two per cent)<sup>14</sup>. In subjects such as business studies, historical and philosophical studies, languages and subjects allied to medicine, just over one per cent of graduates go into self-employment.

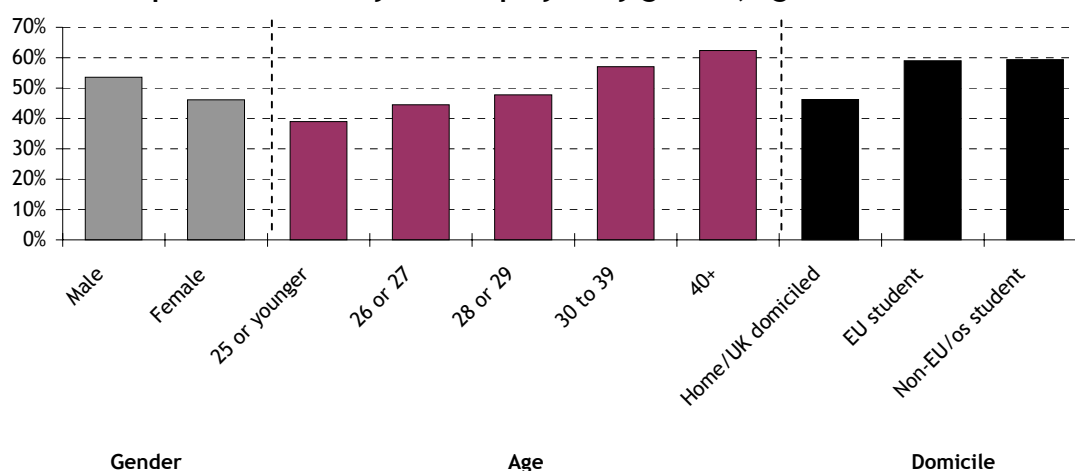
However, self-employment becomes more common as careers progress. As reported in Chapter 6, a sizeable proportion of CGCF respondents had experienced self-employment (45 per cent) or running a business (25 per cent) since graduation (see Table App. B1b.1).

At the time of the survey, graduates continued to be self-employed, with 18 per cent of graduates running a business (double that of D&R at nine per cent) and 23 per cent were working freelance/self-employed (see Table App. B1a.1). Recent studies confirm this picture with 17 per cent of graduates from Glasgow School of Art undertaking self-employed work.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Source: DLHE (2004) Table 3avi 2002/2003 Destinations of all UK domiciled leavers who obtained first degrees through full-time study by subject of study.

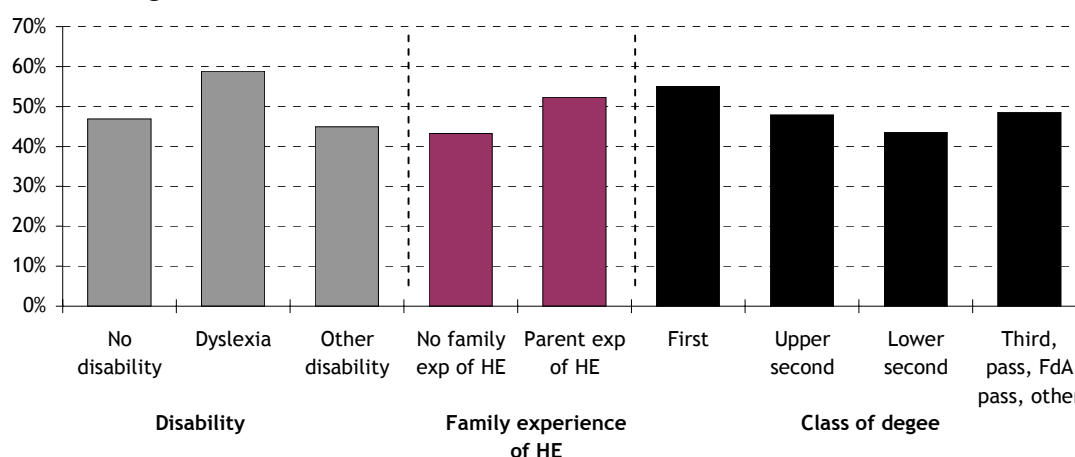
<sup>15</sup> Survey point between three and seven years after qualifying.



**Figure 7.7: Proportion currently self-employed by gender, age and domicile**

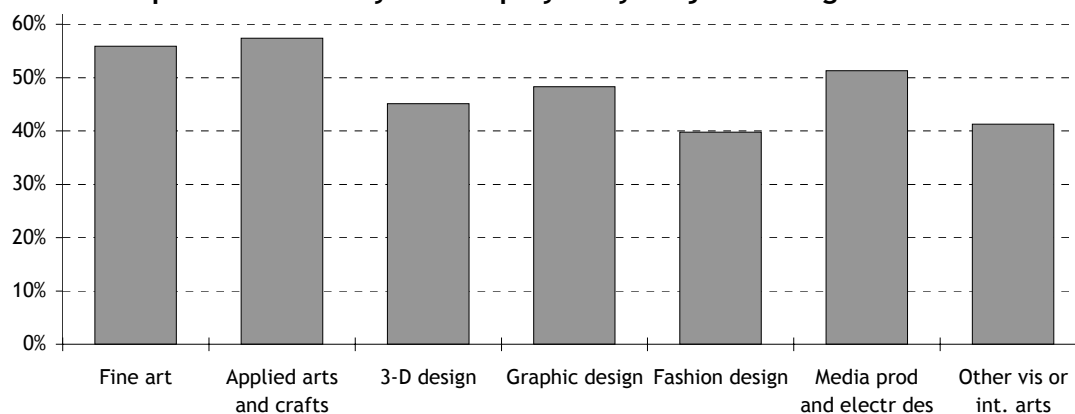
Base: all those reporting work-related activities

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Table App. C3.7*

**Figure 7.8: Proportion currently self-employed by disability, family experience of HE and class of degree**

Base: all those reporting work-related activities

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Tables App. C3.7 and C3.8*

**Figure 7.9: Proportion currently self-employed by subject of degree**

Base: all those reporting work-related activities, N=2,663

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Table App. C3.8*

Men were more likely to be self-employed in some capacity than women, as were older graduates (those over 40), and graduates from EU or overseas (see Figure 7.7). Self-employment was also more prevalent amongst the following: graduates with dyslexia, those with parents who had been to university, those more successful in their studies (achieving a first class degree), and those from media production and electronic design, fine art or applied arts and crafts courses (see Figures 7.8 and 7.9 and also Tables App. C3.7 and C3.8).

Regardless of whether graduates described themselves as self-employed in either their main job, their second job or their third job, the description of their self-employed work generally followed the same pattern. The majority were in a creative occupation in the creative industries (86 per cent); and generally working alone (a solo venture, 68 per cent of all responses). This suggests that almost one-third of self-employment involves work with others and so creative graduates may be collaborating or creating employment opportunities for others (see Table App. C3.9). In terms of hours worked, there was a difference according to how graduates recorded their self-employment activity. Where graduates reported self-employed activity as their main job, this tended to be described as full-time work, but when self-employment was recorded as their secondary/tertiary activity it was part-time. Interestingly, at the time of the survey, the majority (61 per cent) of the 1,464 activities that were described as involving self-employment were part-time (see Table App. C3.9).

### 7.3.2 Unpaid work

Working unpaid or on a voluntary basis is a recognised strategy for finding work in the creative industries, and is becoming a more common recruitment method for employers. This 'try before you buy' culture is an increasing feature of the graduate employment landscape across all subjects. Internships of this kind to gain valuable post-graduation work experience may have lasted for a few weeks, two or three years ago, but now it is not unusual to hear of people working unpaid up to six months or even a year on this basis.

Internships may also have replaced 'temporary' contracts, or indeed may be a pre-requisite for temporary or contract work, rather than a direct progression to more permanent work. Stage 2 of this study will explore graduates' career experiences in this respect in more detail and critical points and decisions made.

Unpaid work is controversial in relation to employment law and the responsibilities of creative industry employers, and warrants further discussion in the concluding Chapter 10 of this report. Under the National Minimum Wage legislation (1998) a 'worker' who is doing work that would otherwise be performed by an employee must receive at least the minimum wage.

Two out of five graduates (42 per cent) reported undertaking unpaid or voluntary work or work experience at some time since graduating (see Table App. B1b.1). At the time of the survey, a total of 296 graduates (nine per cent: seven per cent D&R) were working unpaid (see Table App. B1a.1). Looking across all current jobs/activities, a sizeable proportion, approximately one in six (16 per cent), of these activities were unpaid. This includes volunteering and undertaking work related to creative practice (see Table App. C3.6).

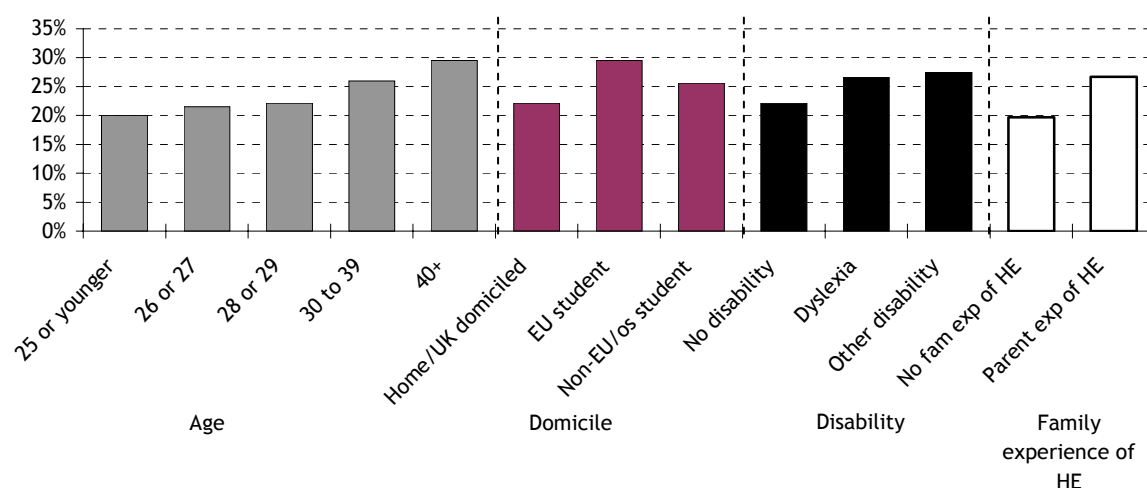
Examples of voluntary working (taken from survey responses) include:

- voluntary work (music and art) with disabled students, combined with paid freelance events management as main job
- voluntary community arts, combined with paid work as photographer and box office agent
- PR events volunteer, combined with temping and PR co-ordinator
- voluntary chair of trustees, combined with paid promoter/centre manager and work as graphic artist
- gallery volunteer, combined with other jobs as gallery assistant and customer service assistant
- textile intern combined with paid jobs as sales assistant and freelance designer.

Those relatively more likely to be volunteering/undertaking creative practice were: graduates from the EU (30 per cent, compared with 22 per cent UK domiciled); graduates with a disability (28 per cent) or dyslexia (27 per cent, compared with 22 per cent of those with no disability); and graduates whose parents had been to university (27 per cent, compared with 20 per cent with no family experience of HE) (see Figure 7.10 and also Table App. C3.10).

There was a pattern noticed by age, with older graduates more likely to be in unpaid work than younger graduates. However this was not found to be statistically significant.

**Figure 7.10: Currently in unpaid work, volunteering or in unpaid work related to creative practice by background characteristics**

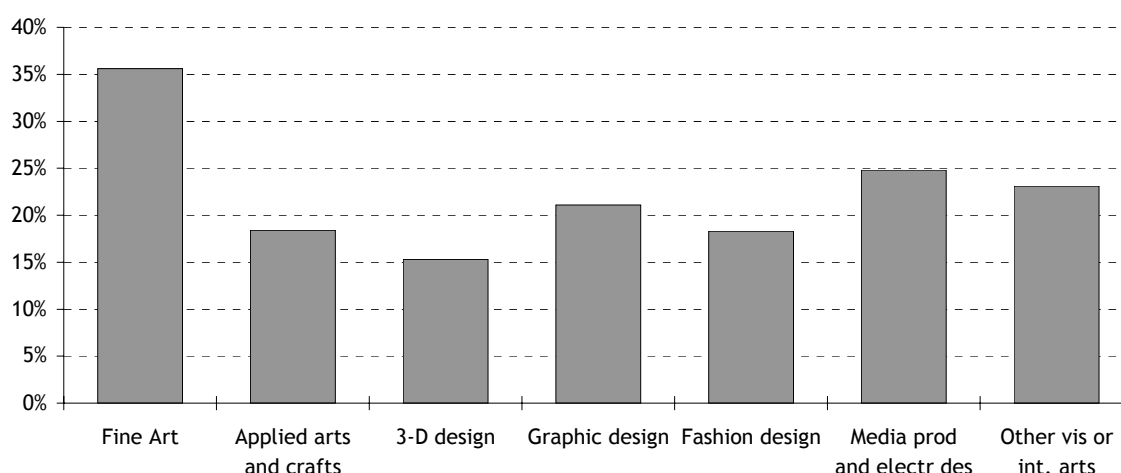


Base: All those reporting work-related activities

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures*, IES, 2010, Table App. C3.10

It seems likely that those from more advantaged backgrounds have more chance of gaining relevant work experience (by working unpaid or undertaking internships) because their parents are able to continue to support them, and it is worth examining the career differences and barriers to progression for those who are the first in their families to go into higher education.

**Figure 7.11: Currently in unpaid work, volunteering or in unpaid work related to creative practice by subject area of degree**



Base: All those reporting work-related activities, N=2,663

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C3.11*

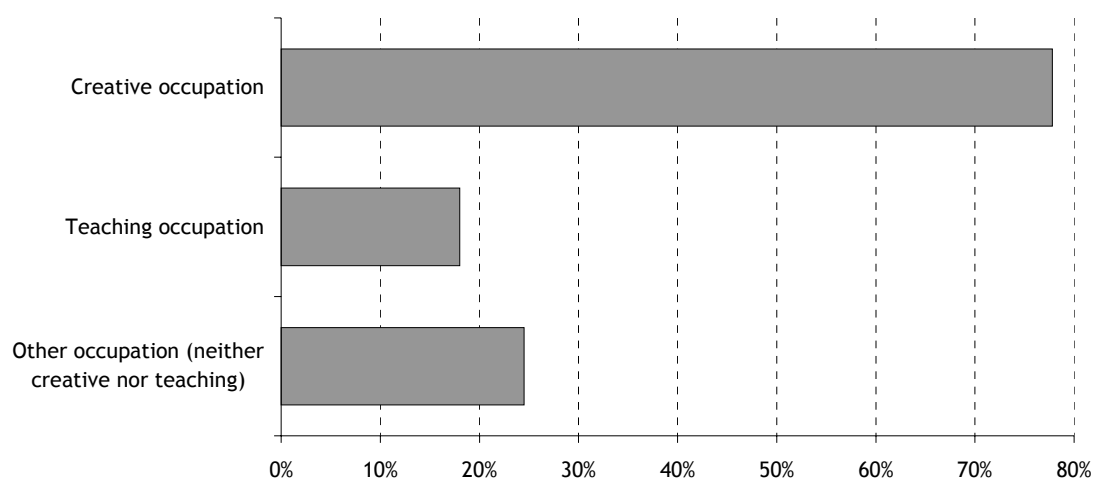
There were few marked differences between subject groups, except that Fine Art graduates were more likely than other graduates to report creative practice/voluntary/unpaid work (36 per cent, see Figure 7.11 and Table App. C3.11).

## 7.4 What kinds of occupations do graduates undertake?

Over three-quarters (78 per cent) of graduates working supplied a title for at least one job or work activity that could be classed as a creative occupation (see Tables App. C4.4 and C4.5).<sup>16</sup>

Approximately one in five graduates (18 per cent) worked as a teacher of some kind, and half of these combined this with another creative role (this represents almost one in ten working graduates). Only one in seven (13 per cent) of those reporting work were neither working in a creative occupation nor working as a teacher in any of their described activities (see Table App. C4.4). (Direct comparisons for all work activities are not available from D&R data.) However, when looking across all activities almost a quarter (25 per cent) of graduates were working in a non-creative role (often alongside more creative activities). See Figure 7.12.

<sup>16</sup> Our category of creative occupation does not include teaching.

**Figure 7.12: Proportion of graduates by type of occupation (any current activity)<sup>#</sup>**

Note: <sup>#</sup> multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Base: All those reporting work-related activities, N=2,539

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Table App. C4.4*

**Table 7.1: Occupation: any current activity**

	N (jobs)	% of jobs
<b>Any creative occupations~</b>	<b>2,784</b>	<b>69.7</b>
Graphic artists, designers and illustrators	735	18.4
Artists (fine and generic)	544	13.6
Fashion and textiles design	211	5.3
Media production and photography	207	5.2
3-D design	139	3.5
Buyers, sales reps, marketing, advertising & PR assoc/asst & auctioneers	112	2.8
Makers: glass, ceramics, furniture, musical instrument & gold/silversmiths	109	2.7
Librarian, archivists, curators and museum assistants	97	2.4
Media directors, producers and managers (film, tv, radio)	89	2.2
Design, marketing, sales, advertising and PR managers	79	2.0
Interactive, games and electronic design	79	2.0
Arts officers/agents	72	1.8
Conference, exhibition, entertainment and cultural est managers	57	1.4
Journalists, newspaper and periodical editors, and broadcasters	52	1.3
Authors	47	1.2
Textiles and garments trades technicians	33	0.8
Performing artists	27	0.7
Printing trades	24	0.6
Musicians	23	0.6

	N (jobs)	% of jobs
<b>Any teaching occupation</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>12.5</b>
Teaching and research professionals (subject unspecified)	299	7.5
Teachers of any arts/crafts/media/design/performing arts subject	159	4.0
Teaching any arts/crafts/media/design/performing arts at school level	22	0.6
<b>Any non-creative occupations</b>	<b>710</b>	<b>17.8</b>
Other business and public service associate professionals	94	2.4
Sales and customer service occupations	91	2.3
Managers and senior officials	86	2.2
Personal service occupations	87	2.2
Other administrative and secretarial occupations	74	1.9
Health and social welfare associates	41	1.0
Elementary occupations	43	1.1
Other skilled trades	32	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,992</b>	<b>100</b>

Note: ~creative occupation does NOT include teaching

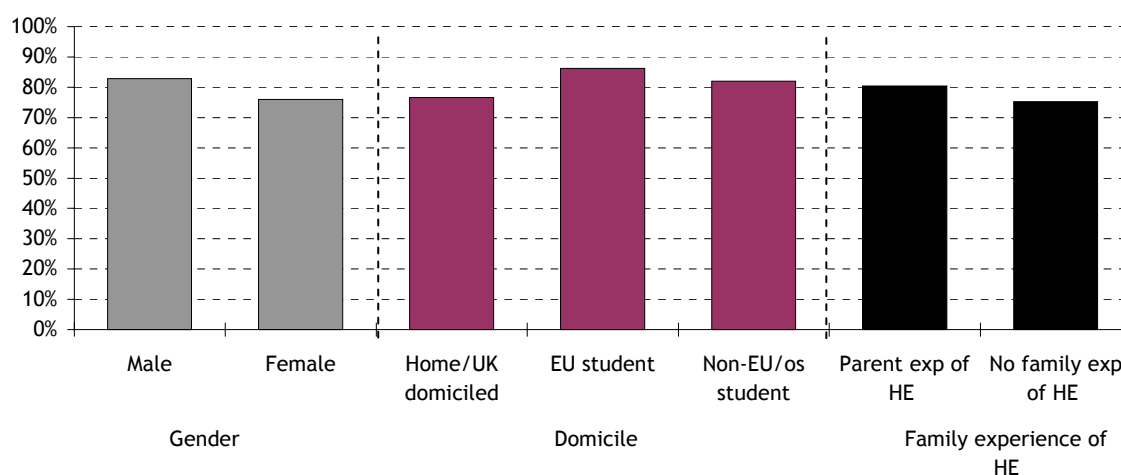
Note: occupational coding based around Standard Occupational Codes (SOC), occupations with less than 20 are not reported in this table

Base: all those reporting work-related activities (excludes 'don't know' and missing or irrelevant answers) (C1)

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Table App. C4.5*

Across the range of work activity – gender, student status, family experience of HE, and also classification and subject area of degree – were all found to be significantly associated with the likelihood of reporting a creative occupation (see Figure 7.13).

**Figure 7.13: Creative role in any of up to three jobs/work-related activities by personal characteristics**

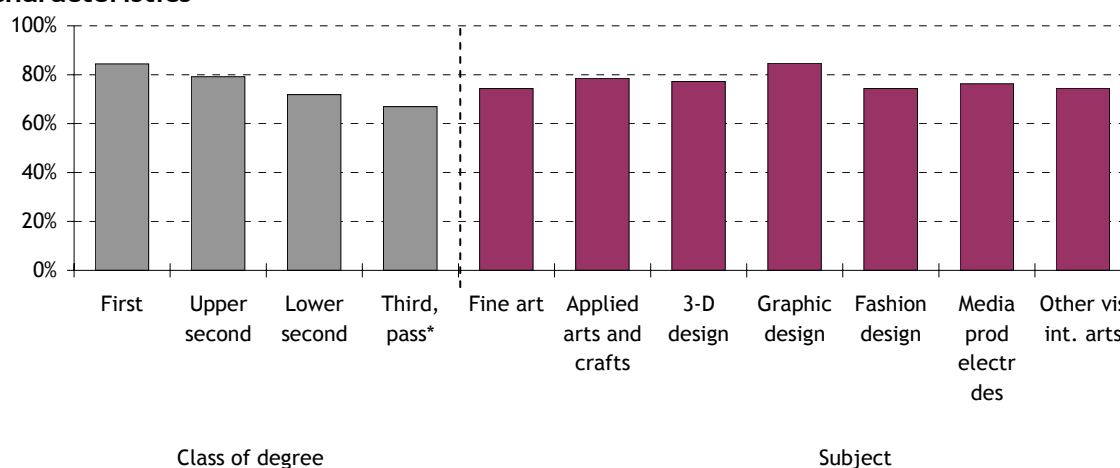


Base: All those reporting work-related activities

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C4.13*

Indeed, men were more likely than women to have a creative occupation in one or more of their jobs (83 per cent compared to 76 per cent). EU and overseas graduates were relatively more likely to be in a creative role than UK/home graduates (86 and 82 per cent compared with 77 per cent). Also those graduates with parents who had been to university were more likely than others to be in a creative role (80 per cent compared to 75 per cent of those who are the first in their families to enter higher education, see Table App. C4.13).

**Figure 7.14: Creative role in any of up to three jobs/work-related activities by study characteristics**



Base: All those reporting work-related activities

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C4.14*

Graduates with a higher class of degree were more likely to have a creative occupation (84 per cent of those with a first class degree compared to 67 per cent of those with a third or pass), as were those from graphic design courses (85 per cent, see Figure 7.14 and also Table App. C4.14).

Table 7.2 illustrates the most commonly cited occupations (across any current activities) of graduates from the different disciplines. This shows how jobs closely correspond to disciplines and also how they vary from one discipline to another.

**Table 7.2: Top 10 occupations by subject discipline (across any work activities)**

	N (jobs)	Rank
<b>Fine art</b>		
Artists (incl fine art)	261	1
Teaching and research professionals	86	2
Teachers of any arts/crafts/media/design/performing arts subject	58	3
Librarian, archivists, curators and museum assistants	54	4
Graphic artists, designers and illustrators	41	5
Media production and photography	33	6
Other administrative and secretarial occupations	26	7
Other business and public service associate professionals	25	8
Personal service occupations	23	9
Conference, exhibition, entertainment and cultural est managers	20	10
<i>Total (those in work/work-related activities only)</i>	<i>490</i>	

	N (jobs)	Rank
<b>Applied arts and crafts</b>		
Glass, ceramics, furniture, musical instrument makers & gold/silversmiths: makers	41	1
Teaching and research professionals	26	2
Graphic artists, designers and illustrators	25	3
Artists (incl fine art)	22	4
Fashion and textiles design	21	5
Teachers of any arts/crafts/media/design/performing arts subject	13	6
Librarian, archivists, curators and museum assistants	9	7
Personal service occupations	8	8
Sales and customer service occupations	7	9
Other skilled trades	6	10
<i>Total (those in work/work-related activities only)</i>	129	
<b>3-D design</b>		
Graphic artists, designers and illustrators	128	1
3-D design	85	2
Artists (incl fine art)	49	3
Teaching and research professionals	40	4
Glass, ceramics, furniture, musical instrument makers & gold/silversmiths: makers	29	5
Teachers of any arts/crafts/media/design/performing arts subject	27	6
Fashion and textiles design	23	7
Design, marketing, sales, advertising and PR managers	18	8
Interactive, games and electronic design	12	9
Arts officers/agents	12	9
Managers and senior officials	12	9
Other business and public service associate professionals	12	9
<i>Total (those in work/work-related activities only)</i>	391	
<b>Graphic design</b>		
Graphic artists, designers and illustrators	424	1
Artists (incl fine art)	98	2
Teaching and research professionals	41	3
Interactive, games and electronic design	31	4
Media production and photography	28	5
Buyers, sales reps, marketing, advertising and PR assoc/asst and auctioneers	26	6
Teachers of any arts/crafts/media/design/performing arts subject	22	7
Design, marketing, sales, advertising and PR managers	21	8
Arts officers/agents	18	9
Conference, exhibition, entertainment and cultural est managers	16	10
<i>Total (those in work/work-related activities only)</i>	592	



	N (jobs)	Rank
<b>Fashion design</b>		
Fashion and textiles design	144	1
Graphic artists, designers and illustrators	70	2
Artists (incl fine art)	65	3
Teaching and research professionals	63	4
Buyers, sales reps, marketing, advertising and PR assoc/asst and auctioneers	50	5
Sales and customer service occupations	36	6
Personal service occupations	29	7
Textiles and garments trades technicians	27	8
Teachers of any arts/crafts/media/design/performing arts subject	22	9
3-D design	18	10
Other business and public service associate professionals	18	10
<i>Total (those in work/work-related activities only)</i>	<i>482</i>	
<b>Media production and electronic design</b>		
Media production and photography	119	1
Media directors, producers and managers (film, tv, radio)	46	2
Artists (incl fine art)	40	3
Graphic artists, designers and illustrators	39	4
Teaching and research professionals	34	5
Journalists, newspaper and periodical editors, and broadcasters	20	6
Interactive, games and electronic design	16	7
Managers and senior officials	15	8
Other business and public service associate professionals	13	9
Sales and customer service occupations	13	9
<i>Total (those in work/work-related activities only)</i>	<i>307</i>	
<b>Other visual and interdisciplinary arts</b>		
Musicians	14	1
Authors	10	2
Artists (incl fine art)	9	3
Managers and senior officials	9	3
Teaching and research professionals	9	3
Other business and public service associate professionals	9	3
Graphic artists, designers and illustrators	8	7
Media production and photography	7	8
Teachers of any arts/crafts/media/design/performing arts subject	7	8
Design, marketing, sales, advertising and PR managers	6	10
3-D design	6	10
Personal service occupations	6	10
<i>Total (those in work/work-related activities only)</i>	<i>93</i>	

Base: Those in work/work-related activities only

Source: Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Tables App. C4.6 to C4.12

## 7.5 In which sectors do graduates work?

**Table 7.3: Industry/sector across all jobs: any current activity**

	N (jobs)	% of jobs
<b>All creative industries</b>	<b>2,585</b>	<b>66.5</b>
Design	687	17.7
Fine art (incl. art market and antiques)	344	8.8
Fashion, textiles and apparel	340	8.7
Film, video and photography	310	8.0
Crafts	179	4.6
Advertising and publicity	157	4.0
Performing arts and music	151	3.9
Cultural heritage (museums, galleries, libraries and arts facilities)	134	3.4
Publishing and literary arts (incl. news)	134	3.4
TV and Radio	77	2.0
Architecture	56	1.4
Computer/video games and software	16	0.4
<b>Education</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>14.4</b>
<b>Other non-creative industries</b>	<b>746</b>	<b>19.2</b>
Non-profit making organisations/charities	174	4.5
Retailing	156	4.0
Health and social work	88	2.3
Manufacturing/engineering	61	1.6
National/local government	57	1.5
IT/business services	47	1.2
Leisure	38	1.0
Banking and finance	35	0.9
Hotel and catering	32	0.8
Research and development	23	0.6
Other	35	0.9
<b>Total (responses)</b>	<b>3,890</b>	<b>100</b>

Base: all those reporting work-related activities (excludes 'don't know' and missing or irrelevant answers) (C1)

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Table App. C6.5*

Two thirds of all the jobs done by graduates were classified as being in the creative industries (Table 7.3), and more than three-quarters of graduates (77 per cent) indicated that they worked at least part of their time in the creative sector (see Table App. C6.4)<sup>17</sup>, a close match with creative occupations above.

Across all jobs and activities, the most common sector worked in was the design industry accounting for almost one-fifth of jobs (18 per cent) and approximately one quarter of graduates (see Table App. C6.5).

This was followed by education or teaching (14 per cent of jobs); fine art which includes the art and antiques market (nine per cent of jobs), fashion and textiles (also nine per cent of jobs), and film, video and photography (eight per cent of jobs). Nineteen per cent of jobs were neither in the creative industries nor the education sector (see Table App. C6.5).

The industry or sector that graduates worked in also varied according to personal and study characteristics. These are summarised as follows (see also Tables App C6.6 and C6.7).

More likely to be working in the creative industries in any of their work activities	Less likely to be working in the creative industries in any of their work activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Men (80%)</li> <li>■ Those aged in their 30s (80%)</li> <li>■ EU and overseas graduates (92 and 85%)</li> <li>■ Graduates with no disability and with dyslexia (both 77%)</li> <li>■ Graduates whose parents went to university (80%)</li> <li>■ Those with a first class degree (84%)</li> <li>■ Graduates from graphic design courses (81%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Women (75%)</li> <li>■ Graduates over 40 (70%)</li> <li>■ UK domicile graduates (74%)</li> <li>■ Other disabled graduates (not dyslexia, 52%)</li> <li>■ Graduates with no family experience of HE (71%)</li> <li>■ Those with a third or pass mark (70%)</li> <li>■ Graduates from fine art courses (74%)</li> </ul>

<sup>17</sup> Graduates were asked to tick only one sector for each of their jobs, however 15 per cent of working graduates ticked more than one sector per job, and nine per cent of jobs were therefore unable to be assigned to a particular sector. Therefore these individuals and jobs are not included in the analysis of sector (but are included in all other analysis).

## 7.6 How do graduates describe their current main work activity?

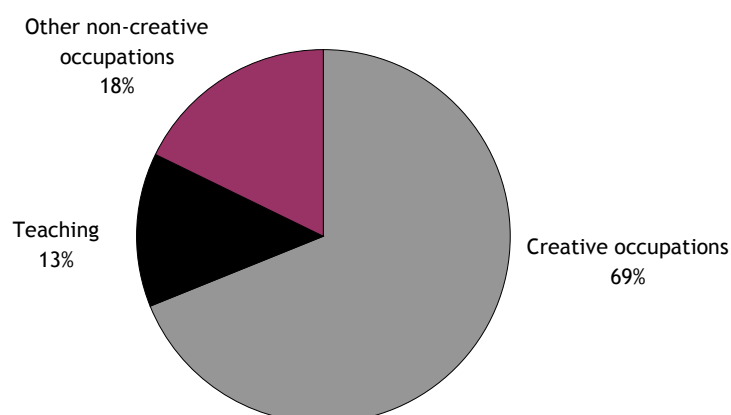
In this part of the chapter, detailed attention is given to the main work activity only, the classification of this work by occupation and sector, and greater detail of the nature of this main activity in terms of type of contract, hours of work and size of employing business.

Again the preponderance of the creative industry sector is very marked both for those employed in large and medium sized organisations but particularly in small outfits and among sole trader graduates.

### Occupation

We asked graduates to describe their main work activity, giving the label or title, and this was captured verbatim. We categorised these activities in a similar way to occupational groupings used in other surveys of labour market activity (ie Standard Occupational Coding). We were then able to identify which were creative occupations and which were not. The full list of occupations defined as creative is provided in Appendix 3 to this report.

**Figure 7.15: Occupation: current main work activity**



Base: Those reporting a job or work-related activity, N=2,450

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010 Table App. C4.1*

A very clear pattern emerges with 69 per cent of graduates occupying roles closely associated with art, design and media (Figure 7.15).

Key creative occupations were:

- Graphic artist, designer and illustrator (20 per cent). Examples of job titles in this group include: magazine artworker, animator, retail designer, and graphics co-ordinator.
- Artists (nine per cent), this includes fine artists and generic artists.
- Fashion and textile designer (six per cent). Examples of job titles in this group include: costume maker/costumier, head of menswear, product developer (fashion), senior accessories designer, millinery business, prop master, and footwear designer and pattern technician.
- Media producer and photographer (five per cent). Examples here include: cinematographer and camera operator, studio recording, broadcast channel co-ordinator,

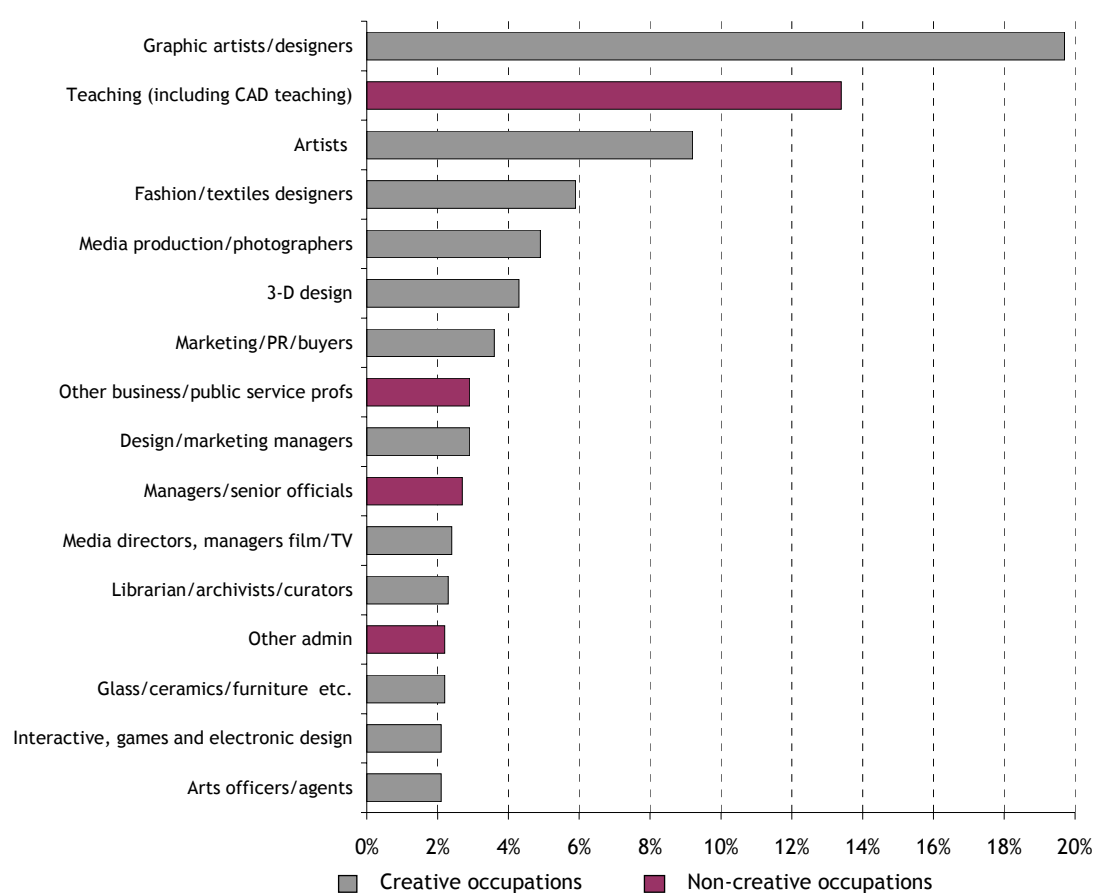
clapper loader, retoucher, school photographer, visual effects artist, cinema technician (projectionist), and photo lab manager.

- 3-D designer (four per cent). Examples here include: interior designer, product developer, theatre design, 3-D models/model maker, and kitchen designer.

A further 13 per cent were working in a teaching role (so if teaching was included as a creative occupation, this would increase creative jobs to 82 per cent), and 18 per cent were working in other roles (Figure 7.5).

Key non-creative occupations were other business and public service associate professionals (three per cent), managers and senior officials (three per cent), other administrative and secretarial roles (two per cent), personal service occupations (two per cent), and sales and customer service occupations (two per cent) (see Figure 7.16).

**Figure 7.16: Occupation of current main work activity**



Note: occupational coding based around Standard Occupational Codes (SOC), occupations with less than 50 graduates are not shown in this chart

Base: Those reporting a job or work-related activity, N=2,450

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C4.1*

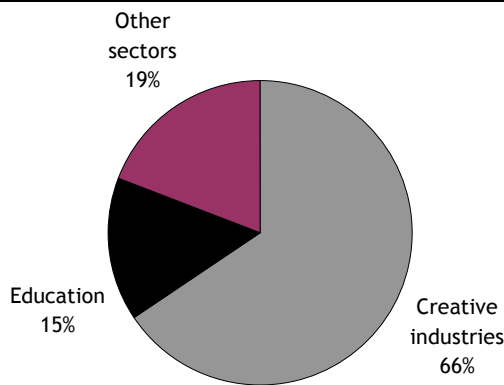
It is particularly interesting to examine what activities graduates are combining in their portfolio careers. These combinations are illustrated on the inside covers of this report.

Work sector

The data for work sector corresponds very closely to that for occupations, above.

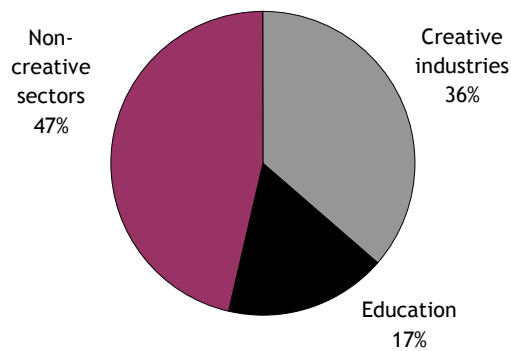
Instead of describing the industry or sector where they worked, graduates were given a list of sectors to select from. These correspond to sector categories used in the Standard Industrial Classification employed by the Central Statistical Office of Great Britain but also closely mirror the footprints of the Sector Skills Councils that cover the creative terrain. Respondents were asked to tick only one sector for each of their work activities. However, it is worth noting that a substantial minority of graduates (nine per cent) ticked more than one sector per work activity, which gives an indication of the difficulty in deciding where an organisation fits in the terms of the work they mainly do. This also creates a difficulty for analysis, and so these individuals are not included in the analysis of sector (but are included in all other analysis).

Figure 7.17: Sector of main work activity - *Creative Graduates Creative Futures*



Note: Respondents ticking more than one category were treated as missing  
Base: Those reporting a job or work-related activity  
Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C6.1*

Figure 7.18: Sector of main work activity - *Destinations and Reflections*



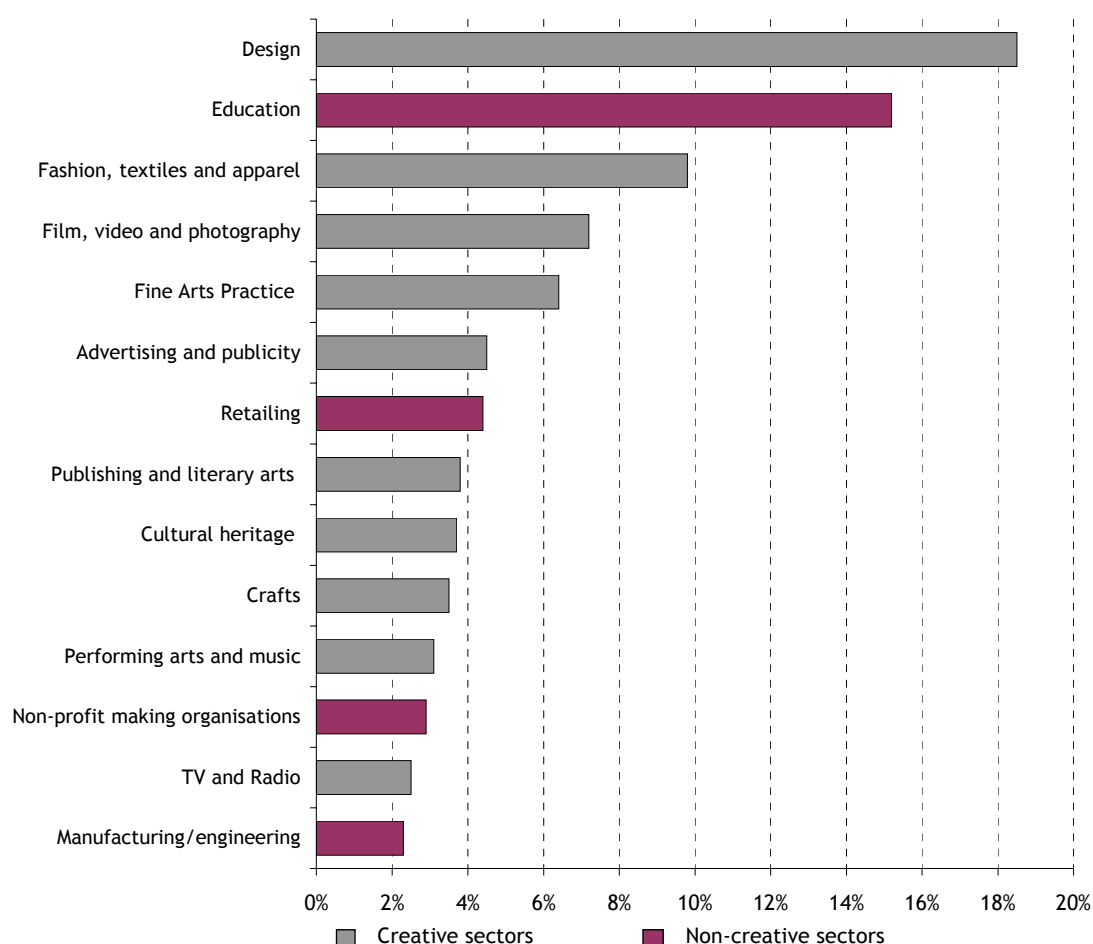
Base: Those reporting a job or work-related activity  
Source: *Destinations and Reflections 1999, Table 5.2*

Focusing on graduates' main work activity (Figure 7.19), two-thirds (66 per cent) were working in the creative industry sector, most commonly: design (19 per cent); fashion/textiles or apparel (ten per cent); film, video and photography (seven per cent); and fine art (this covers the art and antiques market, six per cent, see Table App. C6.1). Overall, the proportion working in the creative sector has doubled since D&R, which found that only 36 per cent of graduates were doing so in their main job, made up of the following: design and publishing 16 per cent, visual arts seven per cent, media and publicity seven per cent, fashion industry six per cent (D&R, Table 5.2, p.35).

A key sector for graduates was education, accounting for 15 per cent (17 per cent D&R). As discussed earlier graduates in this group were most likely to be teaching creative arts subjects. Creative industries and education combined account for four out of five graduates (81 per cent).

The remaining 19 per cent were in roles outside of the creative industries (46 per cent D&R), potentially bringing their unique mix of skills and experiences to a diversity of jobs and wider range of organisations. Sectors most commonly cited were: retailing (four per cent: 11 per cent D&R), the third sector (non profit making/charitable organisations) (three per cent: two per cent D&R), manufacturing and engineering (two per cent: five per cent D&R), health and social work (two per cent and for D&R), and national and local government (two per cent: four per cent). The remaining 12 per cent in D&R were classed as Other, unspecified.

**Figure 7.19: Sector of current main work activity<sup>#</sup>**



Note: <sup>#</sup> Respondents ticking more than one category were treated as missing

Note: Sectors with less than 50 graduates are not shown in this chart

Base: Those reporting a job or work-related activity

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C6.1*

## Occupation and work sector

The proportion working in creative roles (69 per cent) almost matches the proportion working in the creative sector (66 per cent). Similarly the proportion working in teaching roles (13 per cent) corresponds to the proportion working in the education sector (15 per cent).

When exploring the nature of job roles in each sector we see that the majority of people working in the creative industries are indeed working in creative occupations (89 per cent, see Table 7.4). A sizeable minority of those working in non-creative industries are working in some kind of creative capacity (40 per cent), particularly those in retailing or in non-profit making companies (see Table App. C6.1).

This suggests that creative jobs tend to be within creative industries. This would be interesting to explore further. No comparable data for occupational analysis is available for D&R, although other measures, such as relevance of job to art and design, are indicated above.

**Table 7.4: Industry (sector) of current main work activity<sup>#</sup>, and proportion within each sector in a creative occupation**

	Frequency	%	Creative occupations %	Teaching %	Non-creative occupations %	Base - (N)
Creative industry	1,557	65.5	88.9	2.3	8.9	1,457
Education	362	15.2	12.6	77.2	10.2	342
Other non-creative industry	457	19.3	39.8	2.9	57.3	412
<i>Total</i>	<i>2,376</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>67.9</i>	<i>14.0</i>	<i>18.1</i>	<i>2,211</i>

Note: <sup>#</sup> respondents ticking more than one category were treated as missing

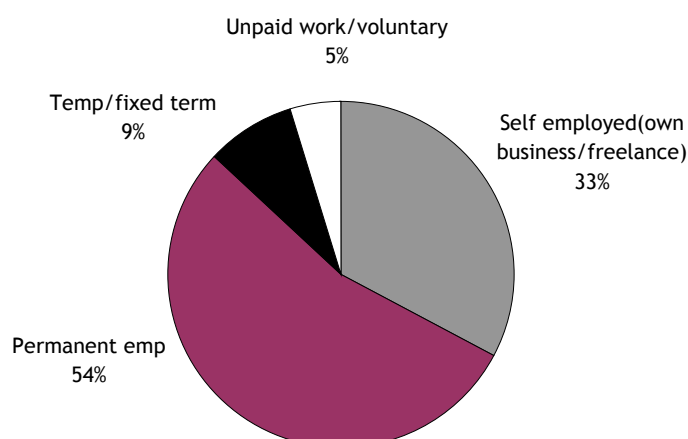
Base: Those reporting a job or work-related activity; and - those with known occupation

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C6.1*



## 7.7 What were the characteristics of graduates' main work activity?

**Figure 7.20: Details of current main work activity - employment type**



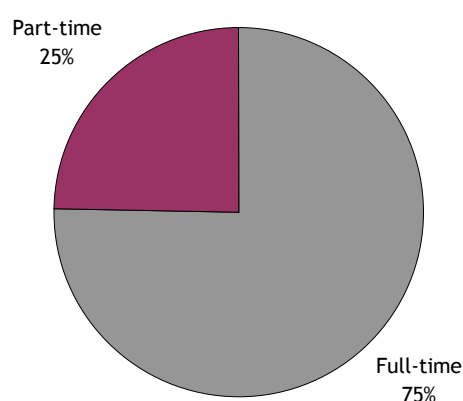
Base: Those reporting a job or work-related activity, N=2,622

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C3.1.*

Over half (54 per cent) of working graduates were on a permanent contract in their main job. Only one in ten (nine per cent) were on a temporary contract and less than one in twenty were working unpaid (five per cent, see Figure 7.20 and Table App. C3.1).

**Self-employment:** It is interesting to note that one-third were working in a self-employed capacity (33 per cent) – this includes running a business, working freelance and commission work. Over one-third of these were not working alone (see Table 7.7). This suggests that either: there may have been some confusion among respondents in interpreting the meaning of the question; or as noted earlier, people were working collaboratively, as freelancers often do; or they may be creating work for others.

**Figure 7.21: Mode of working: current main activity**



Base: All those reporting work-related activities, N=2,598

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C7.1*

**Table 7.5: Mode of working by type of activity (%): current main work activity**

Type of job/activity*	Full-time	Part-time	Base (N)
Self-employed/freelance (own business/freelance/commission)	59.0	41.0	844
Permanent employment (with wage/salary)	90.5	9.5	1,397
On a temporary/fixed-term contract (with wage/salary)	69.8	30.2	215
Unpaid work/volunteering/work related to your creative practice	26.7	73.3	116
<i>All</i>	<i>75.5</i>	<i>24.5</i>	<i>2,572</i>

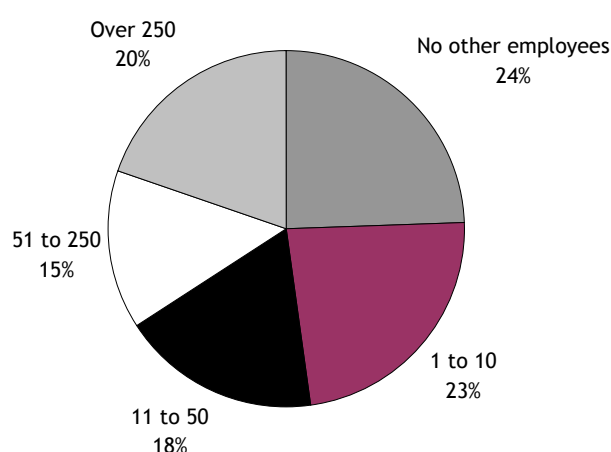
Note: \* indicates statistically significant difference

Base: all those reporting work-related activities

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Table App. C3.2*

**Hours of work:** Three-quarters (75 per cent, see Figure 7.21 and also Table App. C7.1) of graduates worked full-time in their main activity and it may have been the hours worked that guided individuals' decisions about which job to describe as their main job.

Exploring mode of working a little further shows that graduates working in a permanent paid role were most likely to be working on a full-time basis (91 per cent), though those on temporary or fixed-term contract or working self-employed were also likely to be working full-time (70 and 59 per cent respectively). Graduates engaging in voluntary or unpaid work were much more likely than others to be doing this on a part-time basis (73 per cent) (see Table 7.5).

**Figure 7.22: Details of current main work activity - size of organisation/employer**

Base: Those reporting a job or work-related activity, N=2,550

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C8.1*

**Size of organisation:** Almost half (48 per cent) were either working on their own or in micro-businesses with 10 or fewer employees. But one in five were working in an organisation with more than 250 employees (see Figure 7.22 and also Table App. C8.1). Comparisons with D&R indicate a drift away from SMEs mainly to micro-businesses, with declining numbers working in very large organisations (see Table 7.6).

**Table 7.6: Current main activity**

Size of company/organisation	CGCF	D&R
No other employees	24.4	—
1 to 10	23.2	26
11 to 50	18.1	29
51 to 250	14.6	22
Over 250	19.6	23

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C8.1; Destinations & Reflections Figure 5.1*

**Table 7.7: Size of organisation by type of activity (%): current main work activity**

Type of job/activity*	No. other employees (freelance/sole trader/solo activity)	1 to 10	11 to 50	51 to 250	Over 250	Base (N)
Self-employed/freelance (own business/freelance/on commission)	64.6	22.6	6.4	3.5	2.9	840
Permanent employment (with wage/salary)	2.0	23.1	24.3	22.2	28.5	1,372
On a temporary/fixed-term contract (with wage/salary)	1.9	23.3	24.3	14.1	36.4	206
Unpaid work/volunteering/work related to your creative practice	41.3	29.4	20.2	5.5	3.7	109
<i>All</i>	24.5	23.2	18.2	14.6	19.5	2,527

Note: \* indicates statistically significant difference

Base: all those reporting work-related activities

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Table App. C3.3*

### 7.7.1 Differences in the nature of main work by graduate background

As indicated in earlier chapters, the nature of graduates' work activities differs between groups of graduates – this is largely mirrored in the nature of their main work activity.

**Gender:** Women were more likely to be in permanent employment in their main work activity than men (56 per cent compared to 51 per cent), whereas following patterns outlined earlier men were more likely to be self-employed (37 per cent compared to 31 per cent, see Table App. C3.4). Men were slightly more likely than women to be working full-time (80 per cent compared with 74 per cent, see Table App. C7.2). Men were also relatively more likely to work in a creative occupation, though this pattern is largely due to the relatively higher proportion of women who were working as teachers (15 per cent compared to nine per cent, see Table App. C4.2). Correspondingly, men were also more likely to work in the creative industries (70 per cent compared to 64 per cent, see Table App. C6.2).

**Age:** For most age groups there was little difference in the nature of their main work activity. However, graduates over 40 years old (and to a certain extent also those in the 30s) appeared to have quite a different job profile. Graduates over 40 years old were less likely to be in permanent work in their main job but were more likely to be self-employed (33 per cent and 49 per cent, see Table App. C3.4), as were those in their 30s (42 per cent and 44 per cent).

These patterns link to older graduates' career motivations (see Chapter 9) where finance plays a relatively lower role in their decisions than for younger graduates, and where independence and identity is key. Those graduates who were over 40 were correspondingly less likely than others to be working full-time (and in general their work was part-time, 58 per cent worked part-time, see Table App. C7.2), and were considerably more likely to be working alone (41 per cent, see Table App. C8.3).

On the other hand, graduates under 25 were relatively less likely than other graduates to be self-employed or freelance (27 per cent) and were more likely to be on a temporary or fixed-term contract (12 per cent, see Table App. C3.4). Graduates over 40 were also the least likely to be employed in a creative occupation (56 per cent) or creative industry (54 per cent, see Table App. C6.2), as many were working as teachers (20 per cent), however still almost a quarter (24 per cent, see Table App. C4.2) were not working in a creative role in their main job.

**Domicile:** Home or UK domiciled graduates were more likely to be working in a permanent position and were less likely to be self-employed. A much smaller proportion (31 per cent) reported that their main work activity was self-employed or freelance than in respect of overseas and particularly EU students (41 and 47 per cent respectively, see Table App. C3.4). This may reflect home students' greater likelihood to be in a teaching occupation. They were almost twice as likely to be teaching than non-UK students (14 per cent compared with eight per cent for EU or overseas graduates). Home students were also relatively less likely than students from outside of the UK to have a creative occupation (67 per cent, see Table App. C4.2) or to work in the creative industries (63 per cent, see Table App. C6.2, even when accounting for teaching). There are indications that

this pattern may be driven by geographical mobility – the more mobile graduates are, the more likely they are to gain work in creative industries. International graduates were considerably less likely than others to be working part-time (only 16 per cent worked part-time, see Table App. C7.2).

**Disability:** Graduates with dyslexia were less likely to be in permanent employment than on average (45 per cent compared with 54 per cent) and were correspondingly more likely than other graduates to be self-employed (39 per cent) or working in a temporary job (11 per cent). A higher proportion of graduates with a disability (other than dyslexia) were working in an unpaid or voluntary role (including creative practice) in their main work activity than found for non-disabled graduates (twice as many – ten per cent compared to four per cent, see Table App. C3.4), this group were also less likely to be working in a creative occupation (65 per cent, see Table App. C4.2) or a creative sector (40 per cent, see Table App. C6.2). Disabled graduates were also relatively more likely than non-disabled graduates to be working part-time (29 per cent of those with dyslexia and 32 per cent of those with other disabilities were working part-time, see Table App. C7.2).

**Ethnicity:** There was little difference in the nature of work activity between graduates from different ethnic backgrounds, with one key exception: graduates from white backgrounds were almost twice as likely to report being in a teaching role as their main work activity than graduates from a black and minority ethnic background (14 and eight per cent respectively, see Table App. C4.2).

**Family background:** Graduates whose parents went to university were less likely than graduates from other backgrounds to be in a permanent job (50 per cent) and were more likely to be self-employed (36 per cent) or on a fixed-term contract (ten per cent, see Table App. C3.4), and to be working part-time (27 per cent, see Table App. C7.2). However, they were relatively more likely than others to be working in the creative industries (69 per cent, see Table App. C6.2). Again this reflects their career motivations where income plays a limited role in the decision making of this group. In this way, these more advantaged graduates may feel able to take on less stable, lower paid work but situated within the creative sector.

### 7.7.2 Differences in the nature of main work by characteristics of undergraduate study

**Year of graduation:** There was little discernable difference in the nature of the main work activity of graduates from different cohorts (and with differing lengths of career). For example the type of employment contract was similar across the years. There was a slight movement to more full-time work over time and to working in larger organisations but the differences were very small and not necessarily significant.

A slightly larger difference (though still not statistically significant) was in the tendency towards teaching and towards working outside of the creative industries over time in the labour market, with those graduating in 2002 relatively more likely to be in teaching than later cohorts (15 per cent) and the same group relatively less likely to be in the creative sector (61 per cent, see Table App. C6.3, which is not wholly accounted for by their teaching experience).

**Degree class:** Class of degree, or success in undergraduate study, appeared to have an influence on the nature of graduates' main work activity. Those graduating with a first class degree were less likely to be in a permanent role (49 per cent) and were more likely to be self-employed (40 per cent, see Table App. C3.5) than on average. Correspondingly they were relatively more likely than others to be working solo (30 per cent, see Table App. C8.4). They were also more likely to be in a creative occupation (75 per cent) and in the creative industries (72 per cent, see Table App. C6.3), while those graduating with a lower second class degree and particularly with a third or pass degree<sup>18</sup> were considerably less likely than others to be in a creative occupation (64 per cent, see Table App. C4.3).

### 7.7.3 Differences in the nature of main work in relation to subject discipline

There was considerable variability in the nature of the main work actually found for graduates from different disciplines. These are illustrated in Figures 7.22, 7.23 and 7.24 and are discussed below.

**Fine art:** Fine art graduates (alongside media production and electronic design graduates) were the least likely to be in permanent employment (40 per cent) and correspondingly the most likely to be on a temporary contract (11 per cent) in their main work activity, however these graduates were among those most likely to be self-employed (39 per cent, see Table App. C3.5). This is reflected in their relatively greater tendency to be working solo (33 per cent, see Table App. C8.4). They were also the most likely to be working part-time. Indeed almost two in five (39 per cent) were working part-time (see Table App. C7.3).

Fine art graduates were also more likely than others to be in voluntary or unpaid work (including creative practice) as their main job (10 per cent, see Table App. C3.5). Teaching was a particularly key occupation for this group, and one in five fine art graduates in work reported this as their main work activity (21 per cent, see Table App. C4.3). Fine art graduates along with applied arts and crafts graduates, when compared to those from other disciplines, were the least likely to be in a creative occupation (58 per cent, see Table App. C4.3) or to be working in the creative industries in their main job (55 per cent, see Table App. C6.3).

**Applied arts and crafts:** There were higher than average levels of self-employment (38 per cent) amongst these graduates and also high levels of solo working in their main work activity (indeed these graduates were the most likely to be working alone, 37 per cent, see Table App. C8.4), but correspondingly lower levels of permanent employment (50 per cent, see Table App. C3.5). A substantial minority of applied arts and crafts graduates were in teaching roles (16 per cent see Table App. C4.3, which was above average) and graduates from this discipline were the least likely to be in a creative occupation (62 per cent) or in creative industry (54 per cent, see Table App. C6.3). Indeed almost half (46 per cent) of applied arts and crafts graduates were working in other sectors in their main work activity.

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<sup>18</sup> This also includes a small number of foundation degree graduates, who receive a pass mark.

**3-D design:** There were lower levels of self-employment (31 per cent) than on average amongst 3-D design graduates, but higher levels of permanent work (61 per cent, see Table App. 3.5) indicating a stable employment pattern. Graduates from these courses were the least likely to be working part-time (19 per cent, see Table App. C7.3) or to be working solo (18 per cent, see Table App. C8.4), in fact micro companies (those with 1 to 10 employees) were especially important to this group of graduates (29 per cent). 3-D design graduates along with graphic design graduates were the most likely to be in creative roles (73 per cent, see Table App. C4.3) in their main reported work activity, although fewer (66 per cent, see Table App. C6.3) were working in creative industries.

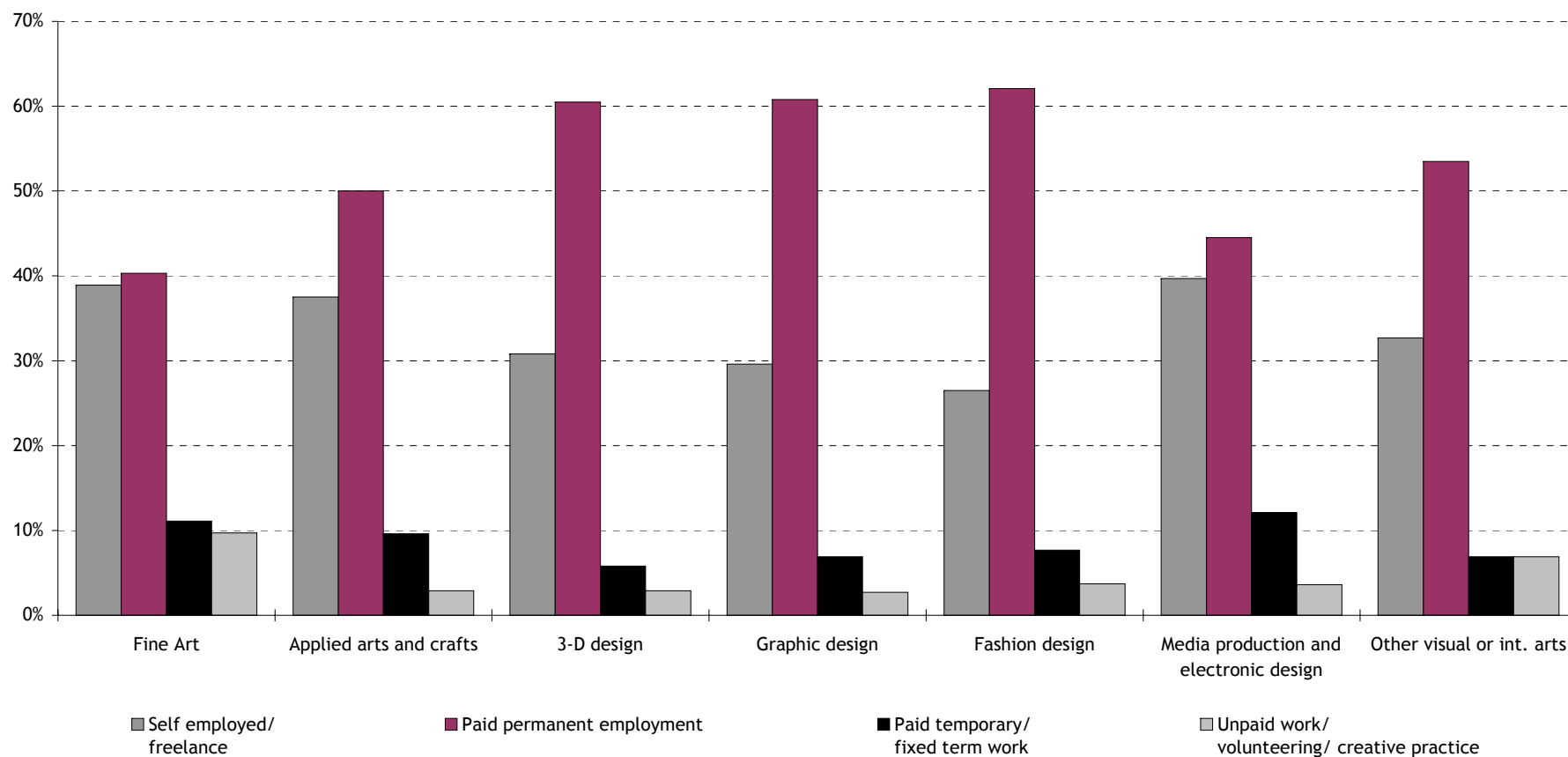
**Graphic design:** Amongst this group of graduates there were lower levels of self-employment (30 per cent) than on average, but corresponding higher levels of permanent work (61 per cent, see Table App. C3.5) again indicating a stable employment pattern. As found for 3-D design graduates, micro companies (those with 1 to 10 employees) were especially important to this group (27 per cent, see Table App. C8.4). Graduates from this discipline were the least likely to report teaching as their main work activity (eight per cent). They were however the most likely of all graduates to be in a creative role in their main job – 80 per cent reported their main work activity was in a creative occupation (see Table App. C4.3); and to be working in the creative industries (73 per cent, see Table App. C6.3).

**Fashion design:** This group were the least likely to be self-employed (27 per cent), and the most likely to be in permanent work (62 per cent, see Table App. C3.5). This largely explains the lower than average levels of solo working. Indeed, fashion design graduates were more likely to be working in large firms than in small firms, and indeed were the most likely group of graduates to be in large firms (23 per cent in companies employing over 250 employees and only 20 per cent working solo, see Table App. C8.4).

**Media production and electronic design:** This group of graduates had relatively high levels of self-employment (40 per cent) and also of temporary work (including fixed-term contracts, 12 per cent) and correspondingly they had the similar low levels of permanent work found amongst fine art students (45 per cent, see Table App. C3.5). However, there were very low levels of part-time working amongst these graduates (18 per cent, see Table App. C7.3). Few graduates from this discipline reported working as teachers in their main work activity (ten per cent, see Table App. C4.3). Their work appeared to spread across organisations of different sizes, however they were among the most likely graduates to be working in non-creative roles (22 per cent) although they had above average levels of work in creative industries (70 per cent, see Table App. C6.3).

**Other visual and interdisciplinary arts:** This was the smallest group (around 100 in number reporting work activities) and therefore findings are illustrative only. One-third (33 per cent) were self-employed, and just over half were in permanent employment (Table App. C3.5). The inter-disciplinary nature of courses appears to prepare these graduates for a mix of career possibilities, with two-thirds (62 per cent) in a creative occupation for their main job, 24 per cent in a non-creative occupation (24 per cent) and a further 14 per cent in teaching (Table App. C4.3). Three-quarters were working full time in their main occupation (Table App. C7.3). They were more likely to work on a voluntary basis than other groups (seven per cent) with the exception of fine artists.

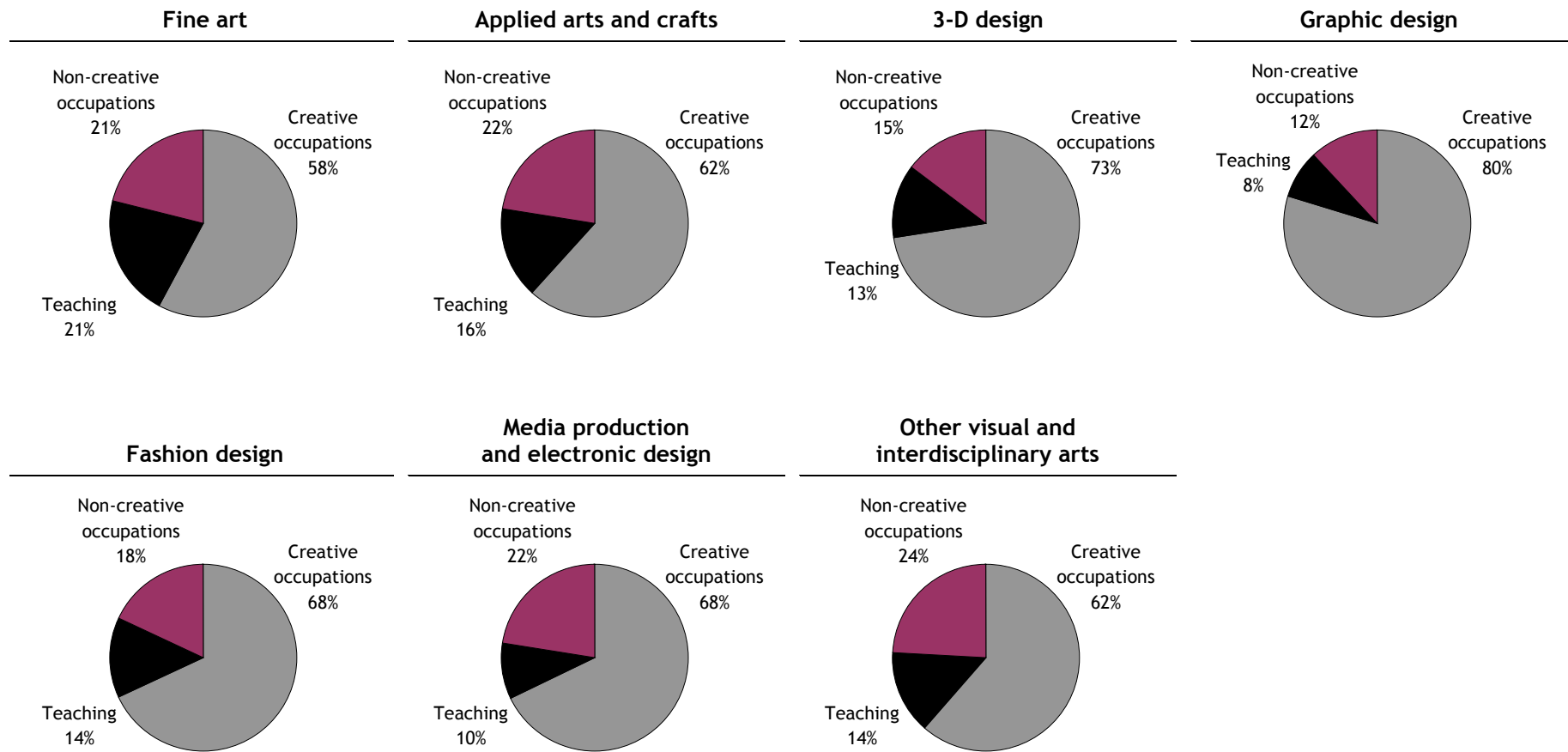


**Figure 7.23: Current main work activity by subject area of degree**

Base: All those reporting work-related activities (excludes missing or erroneous answers), N=2,622

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C3.5*

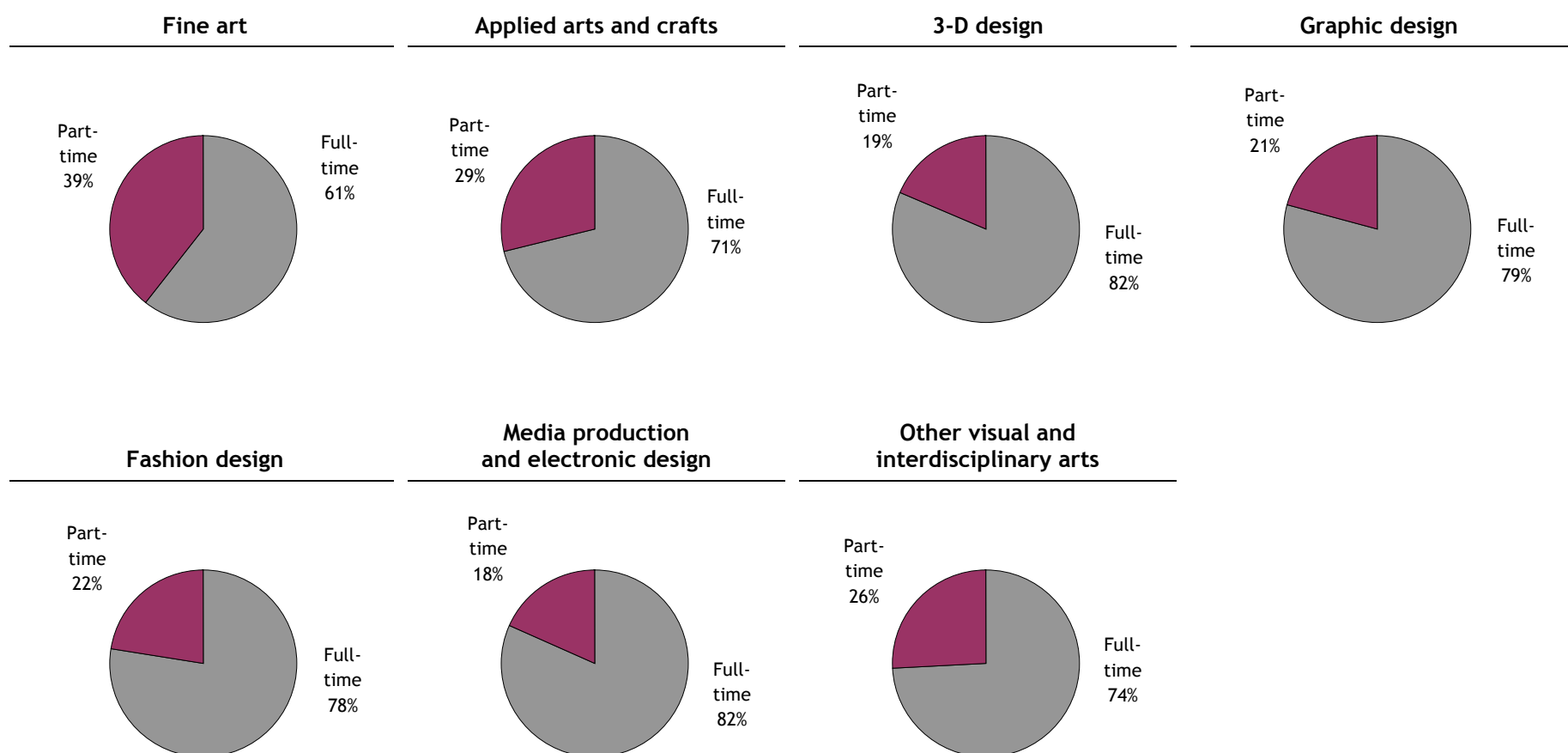


**Figure 7.24: Occupation by subject area of degree: current main work activity**

Base: All those reporting work-related activities (excludes missing or erroneous answers), N=2,359

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C4.3*

Figure 7.25: Mode of working by study characteristics: current main work activity



Base: All those reporting work-related activities (excludes missing or erroneous answers), N=2,359

Source: Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C7.3

## 7.8 Where are graduates living and working?

Over half (53 per cent) of all graduates covered by the survey (whether working or not) were living in the South of England at the time of the survey: a quarter (26 per cent) lived in London, 17 per cent were living in the wider South East, and 10 per cent lived in the South West of England. In addition, 12 per cent were living in the Midlands or East Anglia, 14 per cent in the North of England, nine per cent were in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, and a further 12 per cent were living overseas (see Table App. F1.1).

### UK area prior to study compared with current location

It would appear that there had been a migration of graduates from each of the English, Scottish and Welsh regions towards London, as a much greater proportion of creative graduates lived in London at the time of the survey than did so prior to commencing their undergraduate studies (26 per cent compared to 14 per cent).

UK graduates did not appear to be working overseas in greater numbers, with only a two per cent point net migration out of the UK (at the time of the survey 12 per cent of graduates reporting living overseas, whereas 10 per cent did so prior to their degree study, see Table App. F1.1).

### UK area in which graduates studied compared with current location

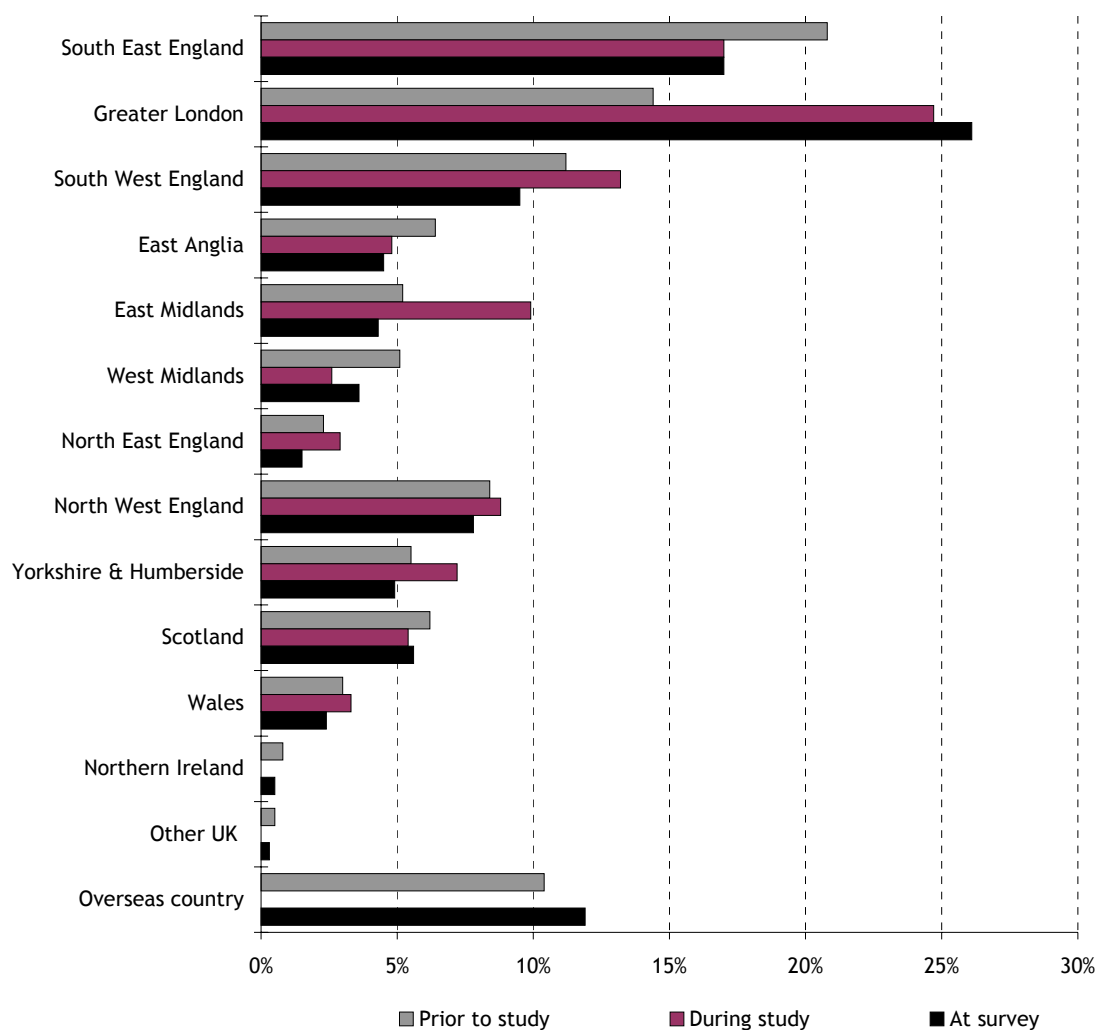
Looking at migration in relation to where graduates studied and where they are now working, net gains were noticed for London, with small gains in West Midlands and Scotland. Losses were notably in South West of England (falling from 13 per cent to 10 per cent) and the East Midlands (falling from ten per cent to four per cent, see Figure 7.26 and also Table App. F1.1).

This picture is similar in some respects to current migration patterns for graduates in all subjects of study at UK universities. *Prospects – Graduate Market Trends* (Marriott and Ball, 2009) (based on first destination data six months after graduation, DLHE) notes that across all subjects there is a marked draw of graduates educated in the regions to London (+61 per cent). However, retention rates for graduates educated in other regions present a different picture: with large gains in the East of England (+40 per cent) and losses in East Midlands (-29 per cent) and Wales (-20 per cent), and smaller net losses in the South West of England (-9 per cent) and in Scotland (-6 per cent).

In contrast, recent data for changes in workers<sup>19</sup> (employed and self-employed) in creative industries between 2006-2008 show a drift away from London (-11 per cent), growth in N Ireland (+ 45 per cent) and net gains in all the other regions apart from the West Midlands, and this warrants further investigation.

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<sup>19</sup> CCSkills (2009), *Footprint and Impact*

**Figure 7.26: Location before, during and after study (at the time of the survey)**

Base: all respondents (answering the question), missing data or non-valid responses (eg don't know) excluded

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. F1.1*

**Figure 7.27: Current location and whether reporting work at the time of the survey, and whether this work is creative (%)**



Note: Teaching is NOT included in our definition of creative occupation

Base: All respondents (N=2,611), and all those reporting work-related activities (N=2,492 and 2,342)

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Tables App. F1.2, F1.3 and F1.4*

### Differences in working patterns by region

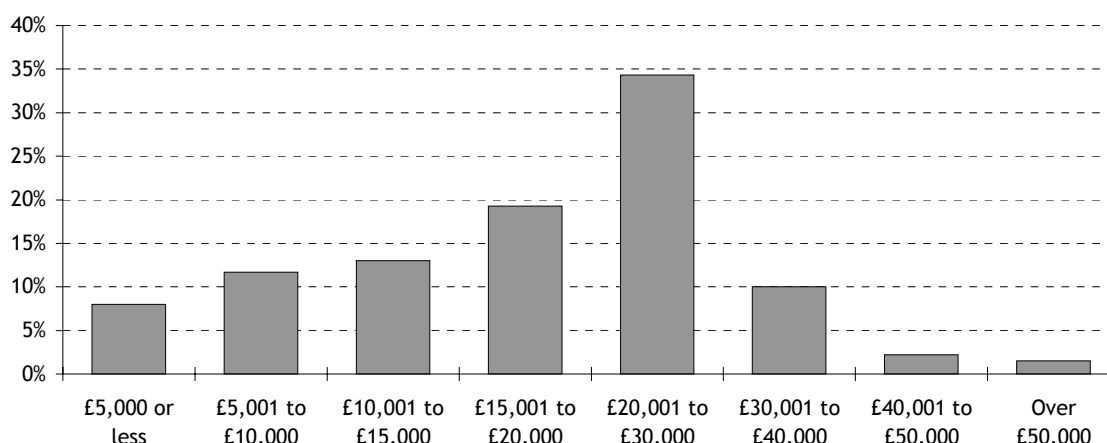
Where graduates lived was found to be significantly associated with their likelihood of reporting work or work-related activities, and the type of work they do (see Figure 7.27). Those living in London were more likely than on average to report work (82 per cent were in work) whereas graduates living in the Midlands and East Anglia were relatively less likely to report working than on average (70 per cent, see Table App. F1.2).

### Creative work

Focusing on those in work at the time of the survey, graduates living in London and those living overseas were the most likely to be working in a creative occupation across any of their jobs/activities (85 per cent and 83 per cent respectively, see Table App. F1.3). Similarly, those in work and living in London or living overseas were the most likely to be working in at least one of their jobs in the creative industries sector (see Table App. F1.4).

## 7.9 How much do graduates earn?

The working lives of a large proportion of our respondents involved combinations of income streams from paid work or employment which has an impact on earnings.

**Figure 7.28: Gross personal annual income - for graduates in work**

Base: All those reporting work-related activities, N=2,598

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. F10.1*

**At the time of the survey** (Figure 7.28), 48 per cent of graduates reporting their working situation were earning over the average graduate starting salary<sup>20</sup> across all their jobs and working activities. This includes 14 per cent, or around one in seven, who were earning more than £30,000. However, there are concerns about low pay for the corresponding 52 per cent earning under £20,000.

A more useful comparison comes from DLHE's longitudinal survey of 2004/05 cohort in spring 2008 (all subjects, full-time first degree students). This gives a median salary of £24,500 for UK domiciled graduates working full-time three years after graduation (HESA, published in 2009). The median salary for CGCF respondents (autumn 2008) lies between £15,001 and £20,000 (for all working graduates, see Table App. F10.1, and also for UK domiciled graduates in work). However, it should be borne in mind that there was a high incidence of portfolio working in our study and therefore figures are not comparable as graduates in the HESA data were in full-time employment.

Income insecurity is an intrinsic feature of the daily lives of working artists and creative professionals. Those working freelance will be working in advance of any remuneration, often juggling concurrent projects, and will have hidden costs, such as working on proposals, attending meetings, preparation and working unpaid when tendering for work or projects.

Creative workers often experience different pay levels for different kinds of work/clients or employers. For visual artists, for example, in spite of recommended rates by organisations such as *Artists' Magazine* (Murphy, Jones and Baines, 2007) rates of pay are variable. Portfolio and self-employed workers may also experience working to a budget, or a fixed price for a particular job, especially in a competitive market, and work may be done at a loss, working long hours to meet deadlines.

<sup>20</sup> Which was £20,000 (gross) for 2008, the year of the survey.

It is interesting to note some indication of improvement in comparative earning levels since D&R. The estimated average gross income for graduates in D&R at the time of the survey was £12,470 (below the average starting salary for 1996 graduates at £14,750) (and at the time there were concerns about poor pay levels, with only 35 per cent of the entire sample achieving an income above this figure) (Blackwell and Harvey, 1999, p.73). Using a similar measure for CGCF, the average starting salary for 2003 graduates was £16,000, and 67 per cent of all of our working respondents achieved over £15,000 (69 per cent of 2003 graduates only, see Table App. F10.3). However, these comparisons are illustrative rather than conclusive.<sup>21</sup>

Correspondingly, low pay levels account for one-third (33 per cent) of CGCF creative graduates who were earning under £15,000, including eight per cent earning £5,000 or less (see Table App. F10.1). When interpreting earnings, it is worth noting that almost one quarter of graduates' current activities were unpaid (23 per cent, see Table App. C3.6) and this is likely to depress salary levels.

For some graduates, earning a good salary or having a stable income may be relatively unimportant, and others may be prepared to trade off higher earnings to achieve other aspects of their work or their living situation (see Chapter 9 for a more detailed discussion of career motivations).

### Differences in earnings

There was considerable variability in the earnings of working graduates which is likely to reflect graduates' working patterns and working hours in which they typically combine work-related activities (generally two part-time jobs will pay less than one full-time job) and unpaid work. This is also likely to reflect graduates' career motivations (see Chapter 9), in particular the relative importance of financial factors in career decision-making.

**Creative occupations:** Graduates with at least one of their jobs in a creative occupation were more likely to be on a lower income (34 per cent compared with 28 per cent earning £15,000 or less) and, similarly, those working in the creative industries in any one of their work activities were more likely to be on lower incomes than those with no current creative work (35 per cent compared with 24 per cent, see Table App. F10.4).

However, the proportions with high earnings were very similar when comparing those with some creative work and those in other kinds of work. This may reflect the trade off mentioned earlier, with some graduates trading salary for achieving their goal to work in a creative role (which, as outlined in Chapter 9, was the goal and remains the goal for the vast majority of creative graduates).

It is also interesting to note that graduates with only one job tended to earn more on average (only 22 per cent earned less than £15,000 compared to 48 per cent of those with at least three jobs or work-related activities, see Table App. F10.4).

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<sup>21</sup> Source of graduate starting salary data for 1996 and 2003: Association of Graduate Recruiters.

**Gender:** Women in work were much more likely than men to be on a low income (36 per cent compared to 25 per cent were earning less than £15,000), while men were twice as likely as women to be earning more than £30,000 (22 per cent compared to 10 per cent, see Table App. F10.2) and this difference reflects broad trends in DLHE data.

**Age and year of graduation:** Graduates aged over 40 who were in work were much more likely to be on a low income (63 per cent), while the highest earners tended to be those in their 30s or late 20s (see Table App. F10.2). Those graduating more recently were more likely to be on lower incomes (35 per cent of 2004 graduates, compared to 29 per cent of 2002 graduates earned less than £15,000, see Table App. F10.3). These patterns may reflect the relatively low importance older graduates place on financial factors in career decision making, and their different employment profile – a greater incidence of unpaid work and part-time paid work. This may also reflect the fact that younger and more recent graduates are likely to have less labour market experience (as older graduates may have existing labour market capital prior to starting their degree) and will not have had as much time to establish their careers since graduating.

**Domicile:** Although UK domiciled graduates were less likely to be on a low wage than on average, they were also less likely than EU and overseas domiciled graduates to be earning more than £30,000 (13, 16 and 20 per cent respectively, see Table App. F10.2). This may reflect the opportunities and salary levels on offer in the UK compared to overseas. Indeed, it would be interesting to see where these EU and overseas students were located at the time of the survey to test this theory and to also to explore this in further stages of the project.

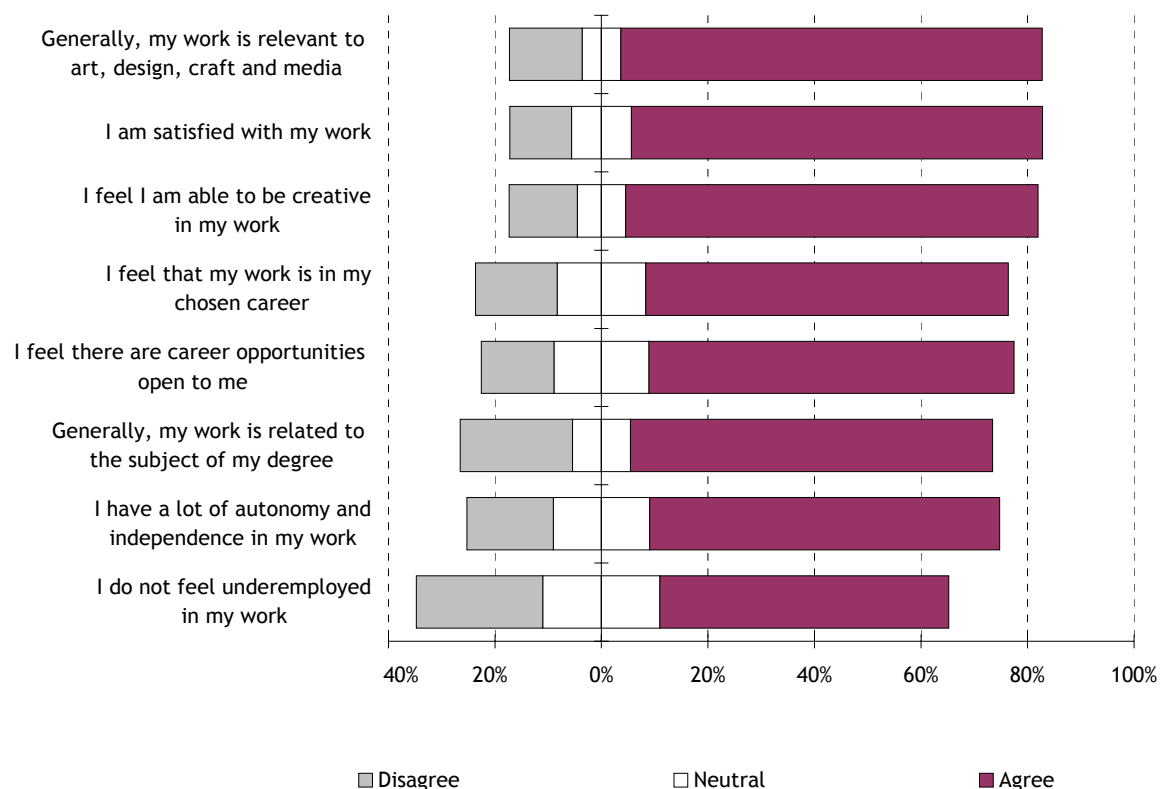
Those who were less successful in their studies, graduating with a lower classified degree, were more likely to be on low incomes than those with higher classifications (45 per cent compared to 31 per cent of those with a first class degree, see Table App. F10.3). This perhaps reflects the higher salaries that generally those with a high class of degree can command in the labour market.

**Subject differences:** Graduates of 3-D design and graphic design tended to earn more on average (21 per cent and 14 per cent respectively earned over £30,000; and 26 per cent and 25 per cent earned £15,000 or less, see Table App. F10.3), and these graduates were more likely than others to be motivated by financial factors when making career decisions. Conversely, graduates of fine art, applied arts and crafts, and to some extent fashion and textile design courses, were relatively more likely than average to be on a low income (49, 44 and 31 per cent respectively, see Table App. F10.3).



## 7.10 How satisfied are graduates with their work situation?

**Figure 7.29: Satisfaction with overall working situation - agreement with statements about work**



Base: All those reporting work-related activities

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. C9.1*

Graduates were generally very positive about their work situation (see Figure 7.29), and indeed 77 per cent reported that they were satisfied with their work, in marked contrast to a neutral response in D&R *'Graduates are barely satisfied with their current employment'* (D&R, p.39). A range of other measures of satisfaction were also captured, and again more than three-quarters of those in work at the time of the survey felt they could be creative in their work (77 per cent) or considered their work overall to be relevant to creative arts (79 per cent, see Table App. C9.1). This almost exactly matches the proportion reporting at least one of their work activities was a creative role and/or in the creative sector (see above, also Tables App. C4.4 and C6.4).

Slightly fewer (although still a significant majority) felt their work was directly related to their degree subject or in their chosen career (both 68 per cent), perhaps indicating some changes across disciplines, or that for some graduates further progression is desired, which fits with findings about careers and anticipated changes discussed in Chapter 9.

Two-thirds felt they had substantial autonomy and independence in their work (66 per cent) and that they had career opportunities open to them (69 per cent). Despite these high levels of satisfaction, there was some indication that graduates felt their skills and

knowledge were not being used to their fullest in their work, as almost a quarter (24 per cent) felt under-employed (see Table App. C9.1).

### Differences in satisfaction

Focusing on satisfaction with work, those more likely than others to have high levels of satisfaction were: graduates from white backgrounds (78 per cent, see Table App. C9.2), from earlier cohorts (and so more likely to have established themselves in their careers, 81 per cent of those graduating in 2002, see Table App. C9.3) and graduates with a creative occupation and/or working in the creative industries (79 per cent and 78 per cent respectively, see Table App. C9.4). Those in a teaching role reported the highest levels of overall work satisfaction (83 per cent). Interestingly, those most likely to say that they were satisfied with their work situation either reported one work activity or four or more (80 per cent and 78 per cent, see Table App. C9.4).

Higher levels of overall work satisfaction were also found for graduates with higher levels of earnings (90 per cent for those earning more than £30,000, see Table App. C9.5); those who felt that their work was relevant to art, design or media (84 per cent) and/or to their degree subject (85 per cent); and those who felt that they could be creative in their work (87 per cent, see Table App. C9.5).

## 7.11 How relevant is their current work to creative art, design craft or media?

Two features of graduates' satisfaction with their work and life were particularly significant: the relevance of the work they do in relation to the creative arts in general and to the specific discipline that they have studied.

A significantly higher proportion of CGCF graduates appeared to be undertaking work closely relevant to the creative arts, compared with D&R. At the time of the survey, of those in work, 79 per cent stated that their work related significantly to art, design and media (see Table App. C9.1), whereas 57 per cent in D&R felt all or most of their work was relevant to art and design (D&R Table 5.3, p.36). However, a further 23 per cent in D&R indicated that their current work has at least some relevance.

There is a very significant match between the subject of study and the eventual work that the graduates occupied. The match was the highest in the design disciplines (around 80 per cent, see Table App. C9.6) but the figure was over 75 per cent for fine art and media production. There was no marked difference between year of graduation in the uptake of 'relevant' work (see Table App. C9.8), indicating that graduates are not necessarily progressing towards more related work as time goes on.

Those who did not perceive their work as related to the creative industries recorded the lowest connectedness between their work and their discipline domain (only 45 per cent, see Table App. C9.7). However, those who had a portfolio of different jobs or work were the most likely of all to find congruence between their work and the art, design and media

domains. Teaching combined with a creative occupation seems to have given the greatest degree of satisfaction in this respect (93 per cent, see Table App. C9.6).

Three-quarters (75 per cent, see Table App. C9.6) of those teaching said their work was relevant to art, design, craft and media, indicating that they were most likely to be working as teachers in these subjects.

## 7.12 Summary

### All current work activities

- Two-fifths (40 per cent) of all the work activities described involved permanent employment, one third (32 per cent) freelance/self-employment, one in ten were temporary or fixed-term contracts, whereas 16 per cent of activities were unpaid.
- Portfolio working is not a phase of development but a recognised and sought for pattern of life in this creative sector, with almost half (48 per cent) doing so at the time of the survey. There was no real difference in the likelihood of portfolio working across cohorts suggesting that the pattern does not change significantly over time.
- Self-employment is key to portfolio working, whether through choice or by design. The majority of graduates in self-employed work were in a creative occupation (86 per cent) and were in the creative industries (86 per cent) and 61 per cent of self-employed work was part-time. They were generally working alone (68 per cent), thus sole-trader status is a major feature of creative graduate activity.
- Just over half of those reporting work were involved in one principal work activity or job only, 30 per cent of graduates had two forms of activity, 13 per cent in three, and five per cent had four or more.
- For most of those who combined two activities (66 per cent) the pattern was of a full-time job together with another part-time activity. Working in two part-time jobs was also frequent (28 per cent). Patterns were similar for those with three or more activities.
- Over three-quarters (78 per cent) of working graduates had job titles that could be classed as a creative occupation, 18 per cent worked as a teacher of some kind, and half of these combined this with another creative role. One in four graduates were working in a non-creative role, often alongside more creative activities.
- Teaching seems to have given the greatest degree of satisfaction (83 per cent) and when combined with a creative occupation seems to provide graduates with a work situation closely related to the creative arts (93 per cent).
- In terms of work sectors, more than two-thirds (67 per cent) of graduates' jobs/work activities were located in the creative industries, 14 per cent in education and 19 per cent of jobs were in non-creative sectors.

- Almost a quarter of graduates (23 per cent) were undertaking unpaid work (including creative practice) in any of their activities at the time of the survey. More than one in three fine artists were working unpaid in at least one activity.

### Differences in occupations by background

- There are indications that graduates from backgrounds that have traditionally been perceived as 'disadvantaged' in some way were less likely to have creative employment (even alongside other roles). This includes graduates with disabilities (other than dyslexia, 69 per cent), older graduates (aged 40 or older, 73 per cent), those from lower socio-economic backgrounds (75 per cent) and those who were less academically successful (67 per cent). Dyslexic graduates were just as likely to be involved in creative work as those with no disability.

### Main work activity

- There has been a shift in working patterns since D&R towards more graduates working in the creative industries sector, and away from non-creative sectors. Focusing on main work activity, two thirds (66 per cent: 36 per cent D&R) of graduates were working in the creative industries sector, with 15 per cent (17 per cent D&R) in education and 19 per cent (47 per cent D&R) in other work sectors. This is a key finding of the study.
- Where graduates reported self-employed activities as their main job, this tended to be described as full-time work, but when self-employment was recorded as their secondary/tertiary activity it was part-time.

### Graduate mobility and retention

- Patterns of migration from original location (prior to study) and also from place of study to where graduates are currently living show movement towards living and working in London. 14 per cent lived in London prior to their studies, 25 per cent studied in London, and, at the time of the survey, 26 per cent were living in the London. Being located in London appears to give graduates an advantage. Those living in London (as well as those living overseas) were the most likely to be working in a creative occupation or in the creative industries across any of their jobs/activities.

### Earnings

- Almost half of graduates in work earned over £20,000 from their combined work activities. Earning levels had improved in real terms since D&R, with 67 per cent of CGCF graduates earning above the average graduate starting salary for their cohort, compared with 35 per cent D&R. There was a degree of variability in the earnings of working graduates that is likely to reflect their working patterns and also personal values and motivations.

- Graduates in creative occupations more likely to be on lower incomes than those with no current creative work. Women were much more likely than men to be on a low income (36 per cent earning less than £15,000, compared to 25 per cent for men).
- Graduates over 40 were much more likely to be on a low income (63 per cent). This finding appears to relate to motivations for undertaking study and may suggest that older students have a different approach to work post-graduation.
- Those with portfolio careers and combining income streams were financially disadvantaged compared with graduates with only one job: 48 per cent of those with at least three work-related jobs earned less than £15,000 compared with 22 per cent of those with one job.

### Satisfaction and relevance

- Three-quarters of working graduates (77 per cent) were satisfied with their work situation and were able to be creative in their work, in marked contrast to a neutral response to satisfaction in D&R. This positive change is supported by the finding that four out of five CGCF graduates (79 per cent) felt that their work related significantly to art, craft, design and media (compared with 57 per cent D&R).
- Two-thirds (66 per cent) felt that they had autonomy and independence in their work and good career opportunities.
- Highest levels of overall satisfaction were found for graduates with higher earnings and among those whose work was congruent with their discipline or domain and who also felt that they could be creative in their work.

## 8 Further study and learning

This chapter:

- explores the extent of graduates' engagement in further study, education and training since graduating
- reviews the incidence, nature and length of formal postgraduate study including teacher training, short courses and the relationship to more informal development
- examines which groups of graduates are likely to continue their studies and what motivates them to do so.

### 8.1 The context for further study

The UK creative and cultural industries sector has a highly qualified workforce, with almost half educated to graduate level, compared with 16 per cent for the workforce as a whole (DCMS, 2008). Higher education, therefore, plays a pivotal role in creative industries' growth through its degree-level and postgraduate courses and provision for continuing professional development (CPD).

Provision for postgraduate education in creative arts and design in the UK is extensive. A recent study found that 135 UK HEIs offered postgraduate study in creative arts and design disciplines in 2005-2006 (Pollard, Connor and Hunt, 2008, p.33) with more than 16,000 students registered on courses, approximately one-third of these being from EU or other overseas countries. The same study found that just over half the postgraduate students in creative arts and design (56 per cent) were studying part-time, compared with more than two thirds across all subject disciplines (69 per cent). Creative graduates tended to be self-funded (60 per cent), with only around one-quarter receiving a grant or award (26 per cent). Clearly there is a demand for further study, both from UK and overseas, and graduates are prepared to invest in their own development.

Changes in the economy present both challenges and opportunities for emerging graduates. Further study, if supported, affordable and providing flexible learning, may well be a serious alternative to seeking employment on graduation as unemployment levels rise. Currently, funding and graduate debt may inhibit increase in take-up for postgraduate study and CPD, yet graduates are keen to develop further skills and

knowledge. This appears to be our respondents' strongest reason for undertaking further study.

The kinds of training and development required for workers in the creative sector relate to both the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills. However, Dann and Cass (2008) identified barriers facing creative practitioners (particularly those under-represented both in HE and in the creative industries) and the areas for which there was most need: principally in the transition to business start up, enterprise and encouraging client-facing skills.

The most common model for study at **postgraduate level** in creative disciplines is through practice-based learning. This is important for fostering innovation and practice progression, providing opportunities for practitioners to research and pursue new lines of inquiry beyond their undergraduate achievements, refresh their practice and engage in critical discourse – often with teacher-practitioners and leading industry professionals. Through engaging with industry-linked activity, graduates are embedding important employment and transferable skills into their working methods.

There is growing recognition by HEIs of the importance of providing flexible opportunities and short courses for creative professionals to update their skills and knowledge and our study helps to identify the types of courses graduates find valuable in relation to their career development.

The predominant model for **continuing professional development (CPD)** in the creative sector is learning on-the-job. The sector is made up of a workforce comprising large numbers of individuals or micro-enterprises (of fewer than 10 employees) with little capacity or resource to support or fund development activity, so graduates need to be inventive and self-supporting in undertaking CPD.

Lifelong learning is important for creative graduates, with further learning and development central to portfolio careers. Approximately half of respondents (see Tables App. B1b.1 and App. D1.1) undertook some form of formal study or training since graduating, with 15 per cent studying at the time of the survey and there are evident patterns of combining part-time working with development activity.

It is clear that the working lives of creative graduates reflect the times they live in. They are naturally open to new learning opportunities to meet the challenges presented, as is evidenced by the extent of informal learning that goes on as a natural part of graduates' development (discussed in Chapter 6).

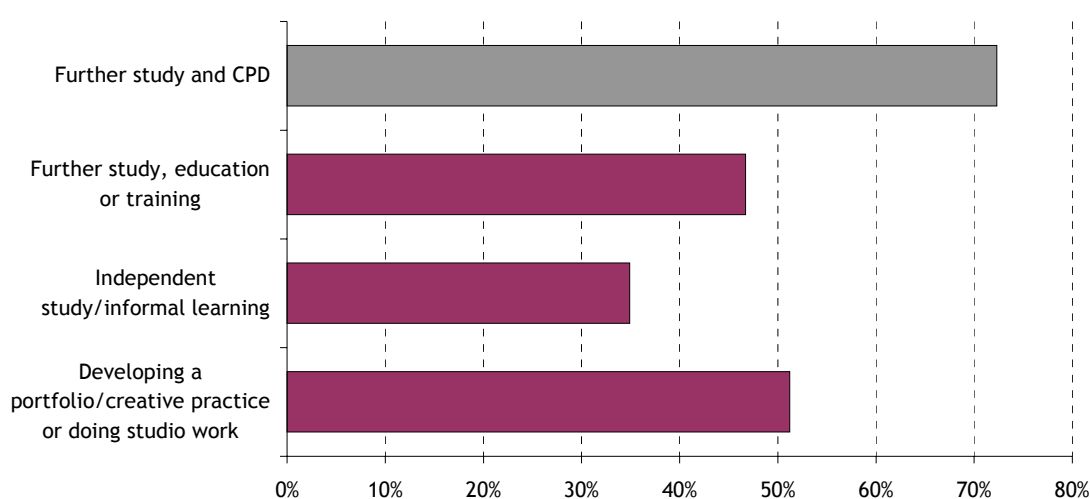
The findings in this chapter tell us about the extent of further study undertaken by graduates and their preferences and further learning needs in their early careers. Stage 2 research activity will explore development needs more closely in relation to career trajectories and aspirations.



## 8.2 To what extent do graduates engage in further study?

Further study plays an important part in creative graduates' portfolio career progression (Figure 8.1). Almost three-quarters (72 per cent) reported some form of continuing professional development since graduating from their first or foundation degree study – including 51 per cent who had worked on developing their portfolio, their creative practice or worked in the studio; 35 per cent who had studied independently and more informally; and 47 per cent who had engaged in more formal study, education and training (see Table App. B1b.1 and Chapter 6). The figure for formal study is close to that found in D&R. Similarly, at the time of the survey, 15 per cent of respondents in both studies were undertaking a formal course of some kind (see Table App. B1a.1).

**Figure 8.1: Extent to which graduates engage in further study**



Base: All respondents (excludes missing or erroneous answers), N=3,457

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. B1b.1*

Other contemporary studies confirm the extent of engagement in further study. A longitudinal study of more than 1400 graduates completing their studies between 1999 and 2003 found that 52 per cent undertook further study at some point after graduation (Glasgow School of Art, 2006).

How do our findings compare with the position shortly after graduation for the same cohorts? For illustrative purposes, we have compared the position for those currently undertaking further study as a main activity in the 2003 cohort with HESA destinations data at six months after graduation for the same cohort (UK domicile full-time first degrees in creative arts and design). This cohort was also the subject of a longitudinal study in November 2006, almost two and a half years after qualifying. This suggests that further study as a discrete activity diminishes over time. Instead it is more likely to be combined with work as careers progress.



**Table 8.1: Further study - drawn from: Current activity of UK respondents graduating in 2003, compared to HESA destinations data for 2003 creative arts and design graduates (UK domiciled graduates only)**

Creative arts & design full-time first degree UK domicile 2003	Creative Graduates Creative Futures 2003 main activity (%)	DLHE 2003 Longitudinal survey in 2006 (%)	DLHE 2003 First destination survey (%)
Combining work & further study	12	4	6
Further study	2	4	11
<i>Base (all known)</i>	<i>898</i>	<i>1,155</i>	<i>18,040</i>

*Source: Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010 (additional analysis); HESA, DLHE 2003, HESA, DLHE Longitudinal survey 2003. Drawn from larger table in Chapter 7.*

D&R found that two-thirds of all further study since graduation was undertaken on a part-time basis (Blackwell and Harvey, 1999, p54) and CGCF graduates also combined study and training with paid work, as illustrated by the current activity of the 2003 UK cohort (Table 8.1).

However, a degree of caution is needed when making comparisons between the three surveys as the nature of the survey questions varied and this table should be treated as indicative only.

### 8.3 Are some graduates more likely than others to engage in further study?

Just over half (54 per cent of respondents) then gave further details of their more formal further study, education or training since graduating, enabling a more focused look at the nature of this learning.

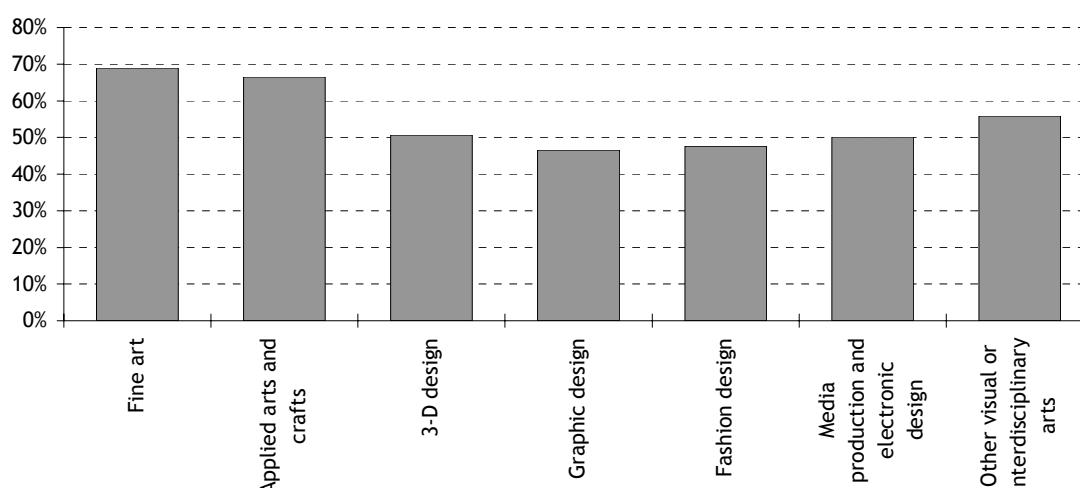
Over half of those undertaking further study had accumulated 12 months or more of study time (54 per cent); 16 per cent had studied for between six months and one year, and just under one-third had spent six months or less (see Table App. D2.1). As one might expect, over time, earlier cohorts tended to accumulate greater periods of further study activity.

When we examine those who engaged in further study more closely (see Tables App. D1.2 and D1.3) certain groups were more likely than others to do so. Those most likely to carry on with study at some point during their early careers were:

- women at 56 per cent, compared with 46 per cent of men
- the over 40s who indicated a strong disposition towards life-long learning (at 68 per cent), and as late higher education entrants, this is likely to be explained by their commitment to investing in their own development or change of career
- those with a disability (59 per cent of those with dyslexia and 63 per cent of those with other disabilities)

- those from earlier graduating years (2002 at 59 per cent). As time progresses, graduates are more likely to have accessed further study or training. This may also indicate a trend towards graduates deferring further study immediately after graduation. The nature, mode and timing of further study will be interesting to explore further.
- holders of first class degrees (58 per cent), perhaps indicating that the academically successful are more likely to undertake further study (although this was not statistically significant)
- fine art graduates (69 per cent), and applied arts and crafts graduates (67 per cent) (see Figure 8.2). This tendency to engage in further study or training is supported by a recent study of fine artists in which half had received further formal training (NESTA, 2008). Those from graphic design (47 per cent) and fashion design courses (48 per cent) were least likely to have undertaken further study, but were still well represented.<sup>22</sup>

**Figure 8.2: Engagement in further study at any time since graduation by original subject of study**



Base: All respondents (excludes missing or erroneous answers), N=3,478

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures*, IES, 2010, Table App. D1.3

## 8.4 What motivates graduates to continue learning?

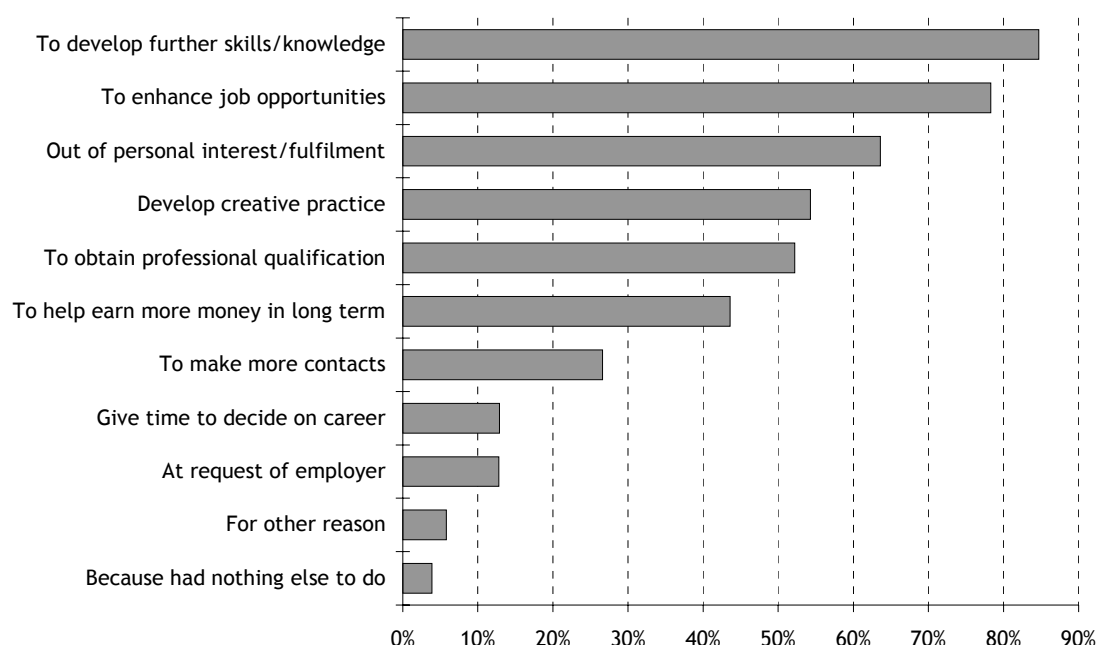
Creative graduates were keen to invest in their own development and go on learning. We asked respondents to tell us about their reasons for undertaking further study (see Figure 8.3). For more than three-quarters of those who responded, the most important reasons were to develop further skills and knowledge (85 per cent) and to enhance job opportunities (78 per cent). Personal interest (64 per cent), a desire to develop one's

<sup>22</sup> Given the slight bias in our respondents and the increased likelihood of further study amongst women and those with higher class degrees, it is perhaps important to note that the proportion engaging in further study in the overall creative graduate population may be slightly lower than 54 per cent.

creative practice (54 per cent), and to obtain a professional qualification (52 per cent) were also important – findings that correspond closely to D&R and to reasons given by undergraduates for going on to postgraduate study (Pollard, Connor and Hunt, 2008).

Few undertook further study as a delaying tactic whilst deciding on a career (13 per cent), which corresponds with the finding outlined in the Chapter 9 that the vast majority of graduates were decided on a career when they finished their initial period of study. Similarly, few engaged in additional learning either at the request of an employer (13 per cent), or because they had nothing else to do (four per cent, see Table App. D6.1).

**Figure 8.3: Motivations to engage in further study (any level)**



Notes: Multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Base: All those who engaged in further study (excludes missing or erroneous answers), N=1,806

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures*, IES, 2010, Table App. D6.1

Fewer than six per cent gave other reasons that included a change of career, learning other skills to fall back on or because they had acquired funding.

### Differences in motivations by graduate background

**Gender:** The motivations of male graduates to engage in further study differed only slightly from those of their female peers. Men were more likely to undertake study to give them time to decide on a career (16 per cent compared to 12 per cent), because they were requested to do so by an employer (18 per cent compared to 11 per cent) or because they had nothing else to do (six per cent compared to three per cent). Male graduates were also more likely to undertake further learning to help improve their earnings potential (46 per cent compared to 43 per cent, see Table App. D6.2).

**Age:** There were some differences in motivation to study noticed by age, with younger graduates more likely to undertake study to gain a professional qualification (25 or younger, 57 per cent), enhance their job opportunities (84 per cent), and at the request of an employer (13 per cent), or give them time to decide on a career (14 per cent). Older graduates were more likely to be motivated by personal interest (40 or older, 66 per cent) and a desire to develop their creative practice (66 per cent, see Table App. D6.3).

**Domicile:** Developing contacts was also considerably more important to EU or overseas students (35 per cent) compared to home students (25 per cent), whereas for home students, improving earnings potential (44 per cent) and enhancing job opportunities (79 per cent) were relatively more important.

**Ethnicity:** There was little difference in the study motivations of graduates from different ethnic backgrounds, however graduates from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were relatively more likely to study out of a desire to develop their creative practice (61 per cent) and were less likely to do so in order to follow a personal interest (56 per cent, see Table App. D6.2) – which is a reversal of the pattern found for all graduates.

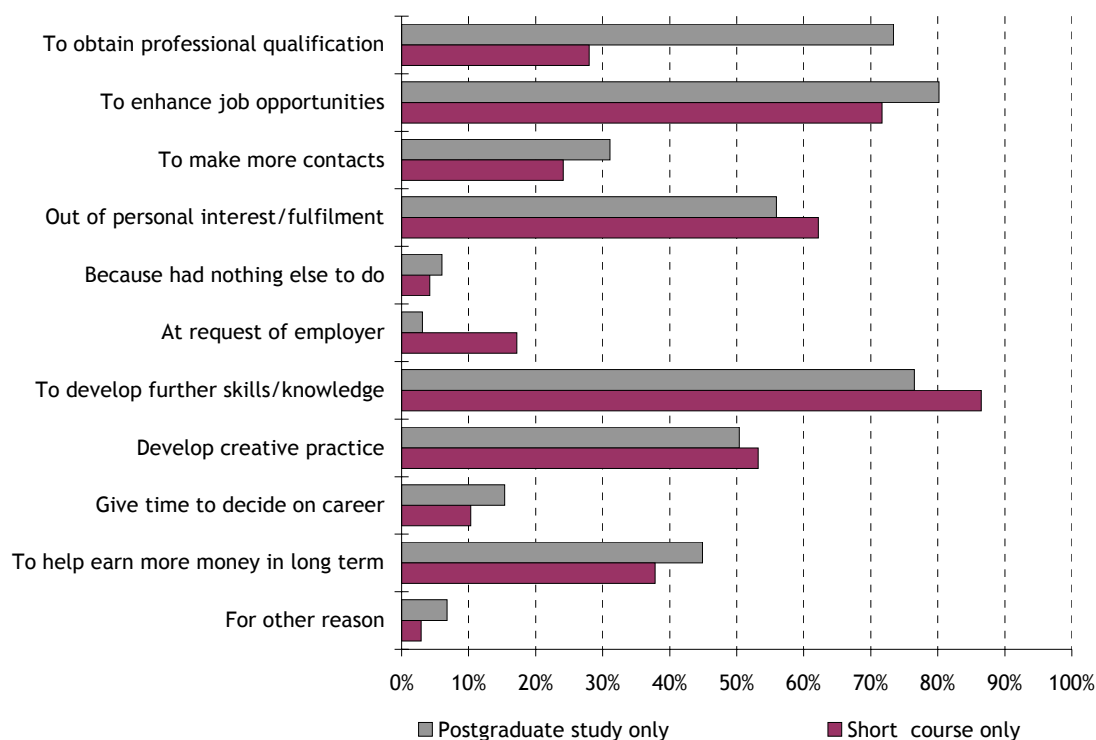
**Disability:** Graduates with disability (including those with dyslexia) were relatively more likely than non-disabled graduates to be motivated out of a desire to obtain a professional qualification (55 per cent compared to 52 per cent), improve their knowledge and skills (87 per cent compared to 84 per cent), to develop their creative practice (62 per cent compared to 53 per cent) and to make more contacts (35 per cent and 25 per cent, see Table App. D6.2).

**Original subject of study:** For fine art graduates, further study was about enhancing further skills and knowledge (90 per cent). These graduates, along with applied arts and crafts graduates, were also relatively more likely to engage in further study out of personal interest (69 and 72 per cent respectively) than those from other disciplines, particularly those from fashion design (54 per cent) and other visual and interdisciplinary arts (52 per cent). Fine art graduates were also more likely to be motivated by a desire to develop their creative practice (62 per cent) and make more contacts/network (33 per cent) than found for other graduates moving on to further study. For fashion design and for other visual and interdisciplinary arts graduates, the key motivating factor to further study was to enhance job opportunities (84 per cent for both) rather than to develop further skills. Also these graduates were more likely than others to engage in study in order to improve their longer-term earnings (47 and 49 per cent respectively, see Table App. D6.4).

### Differences in motivations by type of further study

Exploring motivations by type of study (isolating those who had undertaken postgraduate study only, short courses only, and those who had undertaken both) showed some differences (see Figure 8.4).

**Figure 8.4: Motivations to engage in further study at any time since graduating by type of further study**



Notes: Multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Base: All those who engaged in further study (where type of further study is known, excludes missing or erroneous answers), Postgraduate study only N=383, Short courses only N=378

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. D6.5*

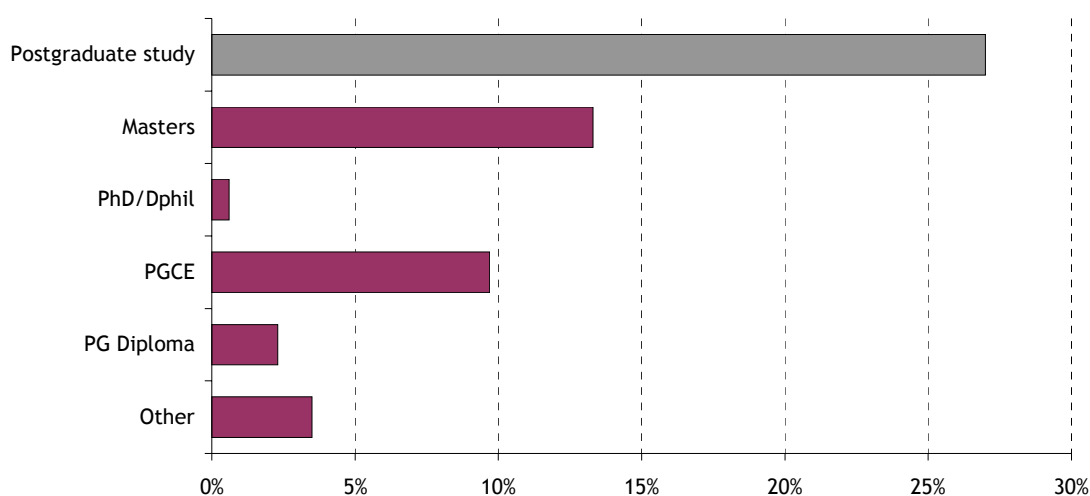
Those who had undertaken postgraduate study were more likely to have done so to enhance their job opportunities (80 per cent) and obtain a professional qualification (73 per cent) and were also relatively more likely to have done so to help improve their earnings potential (45 per cent) than those who took short courses.

Those who undertook short courses were primarily doing so to develop further skills and knowledge (87 per cent, although still an important driver to postgraduate study), enhance job prospects (72 per cent) or out of personal interest (62 per cent). The group were also relatively more likely to have taken their course at the request of their employer (17 per cent) than those who engaged in postgraduate study (see Table App. D6.5). This may indicate that to some degree, continuing professional development is being encouraged by employers.

## 8.5 To what extent is further study at postgraduate level?

Just over half (51 per cent: 955 in number) of graduates who had undertaken some form of formal learning in their early careers did so at postgraduate level (57 per cent D&R). This represents more than a quarter of all CGCF respondents (28 per cent, see Table App. D6.5).

**Figure 8.5: Exploring engagement in postgraduate level study at any time since graduating - level of qualification studied for**



Base: All respondents, N=3,478.

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. D3.1*

Figure 8.5 illustrates that the most common forms of postgraduate study were courses at masters level (for example MA or MDes) and courses leading to teaching qualifications (Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE)).

One half (49 per cent) of those undertaking postgraduate study did so at masters level, and this represents one in eight (13 per cent) of all graduates. Similarly, one third (35 per cent) of those undertaking postgraduate study had followed a PGCE, representing one in ten (10 per cent) of all respondents. Very few went on to study for a postgraduate diploma (see Table App. D3.1).

How does the position compare with D&R? Table 8.2 explores levels of course and illustrates that a greater proportion of postgraduate study is at masters level and at PGCE level for the CGCF cohort compared with D&R, indicating a stronger interest in these professional qualifications. This may reflect the growth patterns in postgraduate study. It is interesting to note the negligible percentages of study at doctorate level in both studies, and this may indicate that further capacity building is required in research communities of creative higher education to meet the aspirations for developing new knowledge and innovation in these areas.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> This stagnation in doctoral research is reflected in data for Doctoral and Research Preparation Masters awards for creative arts and design subjects (panel 2) which shows a marked decline in both applications and awards between 2005 and 2008. For example: Doctoral awards - 98 in 2005, 81 in 2008; Research Preparation Masters awards - 112 in 2005, 44 in 2008. Source: AHRC, 2009.

**Table 8.2: Comparisons between CGCF and D&R postgraduate course type since graduating (% of courses/qualifications attained)**

Type of course/qual	D&R		CGCF	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
PG dip	49	9.3	80	7.8
PGCE	151	28.5	338	33.0
MA/MSc/MPhil	186	35.2	464	45.3
PhD	10	1.9	20	2.0
Professional	133	25.1	n/a	n/a
Other postgraduate courses	n/a	n/a	122	11.9
<i>Base (N) all pg courses/quals</i>	529		1,024	

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures*, IES, 2010, Table App. D3.1 (% of postgraduate study, N= 1,024); D&R 1999, Table 7.2 (% courses/qualifications, excludes 405 non-postgraduate courses given, changing base to 529).

### Choice of subject and institution

The majority of postgraduate study involved a change in discipline and a change in institution. The high percentage of those changing disciplines when studying at postgraduate level (67 per cent) was largely accounted for by those entering courses in education, mainly PGCEs. Fine art and 3-D design were the next most popular areas of study (see Table App. D3.1).

Three-quarters (75 per cent) of graduates who took a postgraduate course did not return to their original university or college, but studied elsewhere (see Table App. D3.1). This indicates a relatively high degree of mobility in the student population and limited loyalty to institutions, or it may reflect: graduates' geographical movement in their early careers away from their initial region of study to areas of the country with greater concentrations of creative jobs and creative companies; the proportion of graduates studying for a PGCE (which may require switching to institutions offering such courses); or migration to take up other specialist courses.

Those most likely to have undertaken postgraduate study in their early careers were:

- women (30 per cent)
- those with a higher class of degree (36 per cent with a first and 27 per cent with an upper second). High academic achievement is normally an entry requirement for postgraduate study (see Table App. D3.2).
- those who originally studied fine art (40 per cent) or applied arts and crafts (32 per cent, see Table App. D3.3). This pattern is corroborated by other studies (NESTA, 2008 and Glasgow School of Art (2007). It is interesting to note that although those who initially studied fashion design had a lower than average tendency to further study (26 per cent), when they did so they were relatively more likely than those from other disciplines to take a postgraduate course (as 55 per cent of all study for this group was at postgraduate level).

Dyslexia does not appear to be a bar to further study. But BME groups seem marginally more reluctant to undertake postgraduate study than their white peers (see Table App. D3.2).

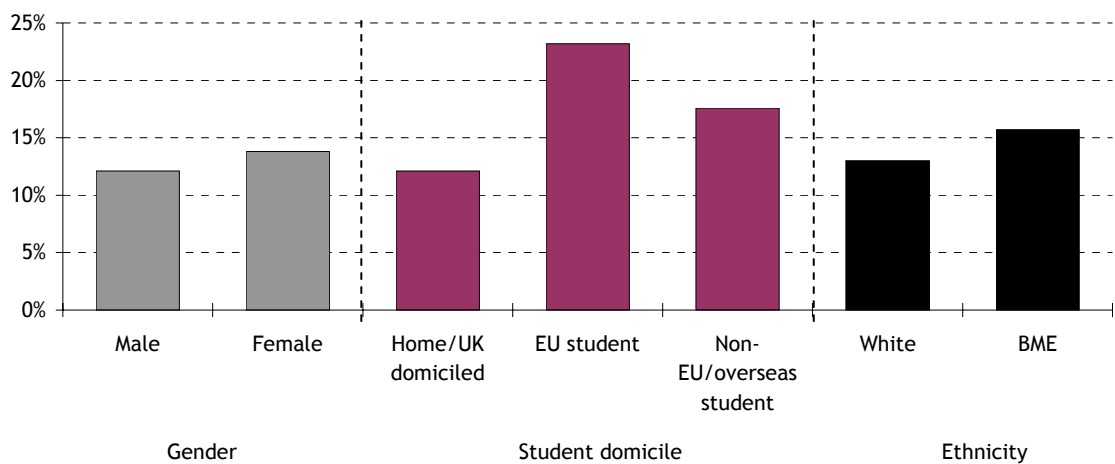
8.5.1 Masters level study

Half (49 per cent) of those undertaking a postgraduate course at some point after completing their first degree or foundation degree did so at masters level (464 in number), representing a sizeable minority (13 per cent) of all respondents.

Those most likely to undertake masters level study (see Figures 8.6 and 8.7 and also Tables App. D3.4 and D3.5) were:

- women (14 per cent)
- EU (23 per cent) and international graduates (18 per cent). These groups were considerably more likely than those of UK domicile (at 12 per cent) to undertake masters study
- those from black and minority ethnicity backgrounds (16 per cent)<sup>24</sup>
- those graduating with a first or upper second class degree (24 and 13 per cent)
- fine art graduates (21 per cent). Indeed, fine art graduates were twice as likely to go on to a masters course than graduates from 3-D design or fashion design (11 and 10 per cent). Other studies support this finding, for example fine art graduates are more likely to take up MAs than other subjects (Pollard, Connor and Hunt, 2008, Glasgow School of Art, 2006).

Figure 8.6: Proportion undertaking a masters course at any time since graduating by gender, student domicile status and ethnicity



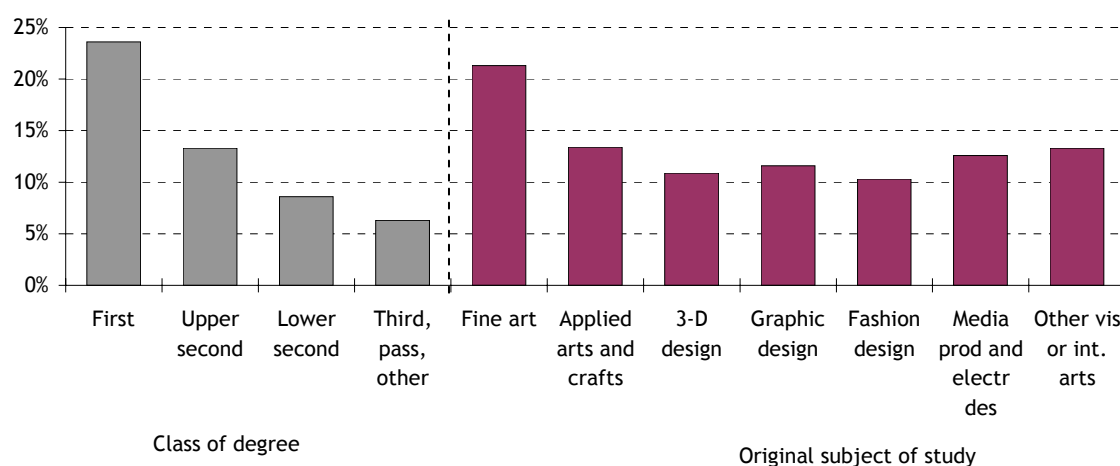
Base: All respondents

Source: Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. D3.4

<sup>24</sup> It is interesting to note that although BME graduates had a lower tendency to postgraduate study, when they did so they were relatively more likely than average to take a masters level course.



**Figure 8.7: Proportion undertaking a masters course at any time since graduating by class of degree and original subject of study**



Base: All respondents

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. D3.5*

**Table 8.3: Motivations to engage in masters level study at any time since graduating from first degree**

Motivation to study	Masters study only		Masters study (incl other study)	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
To obtain professional qualification	126	67.0	296	64.9
To enhance job opportunities	145	77.1	355	79.4
To make more contacts	93	49.5	186	41.6
Out of personal interest/fulfilment	140	74.5	329	73.6
Because had nothing else to do	10	5.3	20	4.5
At request of employer	1	0.5	22	4.9
To develop further skills/knowledge	164	87.2	396	88.6
Develop creative practice	135	71.8	312	69.8
Give time to decide on career	41	21.8	87	19.5
To help earn more money in long term	74	39.4	201	45.0
For other reason	11	5.9	26	5.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>188</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>447</i>	<i>100</i>

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % may be greater than 100%

Base: all those who have undertaken a masters level postgraduate course and answered the question (D3a(i))

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Table App. D6.6*

Key motivations for study at masters level (Table 8.3) were to develop further skills and knowledge (influencing 87 per cent of those engaging in masters level study only, and 89 per cent of those combining masters with other study), enhance job opportunities (77 and 79 per cent) or follow a personal interest (75 and 74 per cent). However, masters study also appeared to be about developing one’s creative practice (72 and 70 per cent), making more contacts (50 and 42 per cent) and, to a certain extent, allowing more time to decide on a career (22 and 20 per cent). These motivating factors were all relatively more important to those who had undertaken masters level study than those who had taken other forms/courses of further study (see Table App. D6.6).

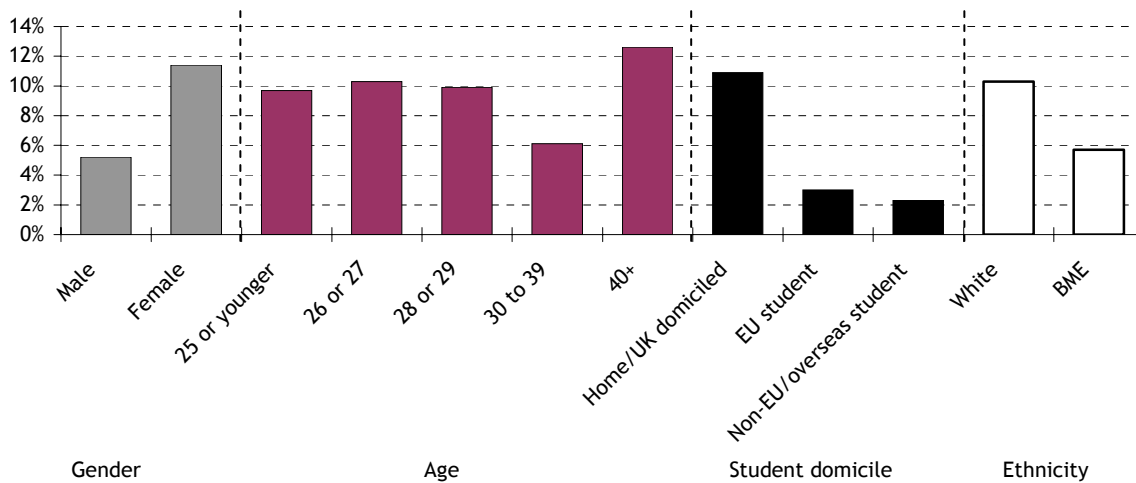
It is interesting to note that 89 or approximately one-fifth of graduates who had studied at masters level were working as a teacher at the time of the survey (in any of their jobs/work activities). The types and level of teaching jobs is explored in Chapter 6.

8.5.2 Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)

Teaching is traditionally seen as a career destination for creative arts graduates. The Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) is the professional qualification for teaching in schools and further education in the UK giving Qualified Teacher Status, and is normally a one-year full-time course. Other modes are available, and there are specialist courses for those teaching arts and design-related subjects. With the advent of the Higher Education Academy, an equivalent qualification for higher education teaching is available in many institutions, and indeed new entrants to HE teaching are expected to work towards a teaching qualification.

In all, 338 graduates (ten per cent of all graduates) had studied for a PGCE qualification, representing 35 per cent of those undertaking postgraduate level study.

Figure 8.8: Proportion undertaking a PGCE course at any time since graduating by gender, age, student domicile status and ethnicity



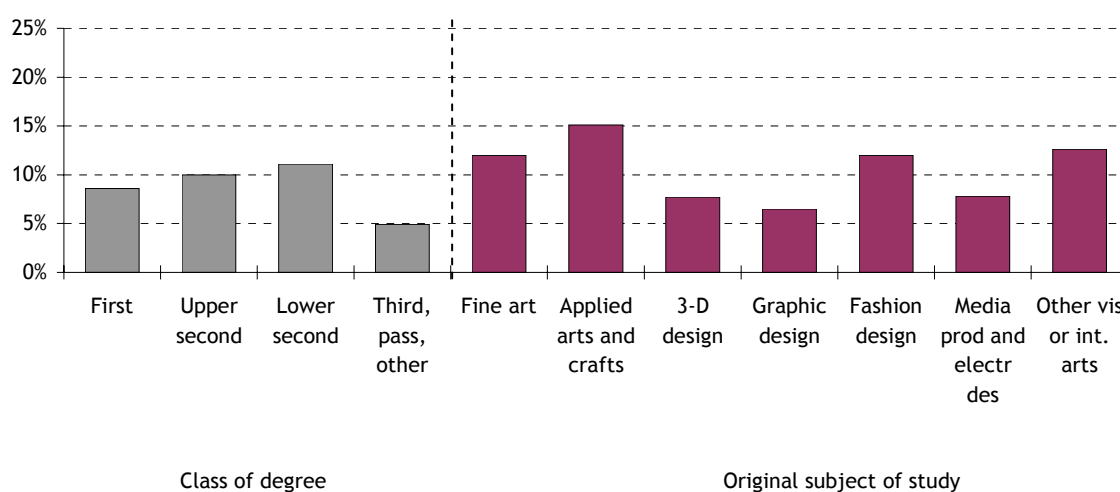
Base: All respondents

Source: Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. D3.6

Those most likely to have studied for a PGCE (see Figures 8.8 and 8.9 and also Tables App. D3.6 and D3.7) were:

- women (who were twice as likely to study for a PGCE than men, 11 per cent compared to five per cent)
- older graduates (those aged 40 or over, 13 per cent). However when focusing only on those taking postgraduate study, the youngest graduates (those under 25) were relatively more likely to study at PGCE level than older individuals (48 per cent of those going on to further study)
- those from white backgrounds (who again were twice as likely to study for a PGCE than those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, 10 per cent compared to six per cent)
- UK students (11 per cent compared to less than three per cent of both EU and international graduates).
- applied arts and crafts graduates (15 per cent) and those from fashion design courses (12 per cent).

**Figure 8.9: Proportion undertaking a PGCE course at any time since graduating by class of degree and original subject of study**



Base: All respondents

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. D3.7*

**Table 8.4: Motivations to undertake a PGCE at any time since graduating from first degree**

Motivation to study	PGCE study only		PGCE study (incl other study)	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
To obtain professional qualification	127	84.7	268	81.5
To enhance job opportunities	131	87.3	287	87.2
To make more contacts	14	9.3	42	12.8
Out of personal interest/fulfilment	55	36.7	170	51.7
Because had nothing else to do	10	6.7	15	4.6
At request of employer	4	2.7	24	7.3
To develop further skills/knowledge	91	60.7	251	76.3
Develop creative practice	36	24.0	141	42.9
Give time to decide on career	11	7.3	38	11.6
To help earn more money in long term	84	56.0	184	55.9
For other reason	11	7.3	21	6.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>150</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>329</i>	<i>100</i>

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % may be greater than 100%

Base: all those who have undertaken a PGCE level postgraduate course and answered the question

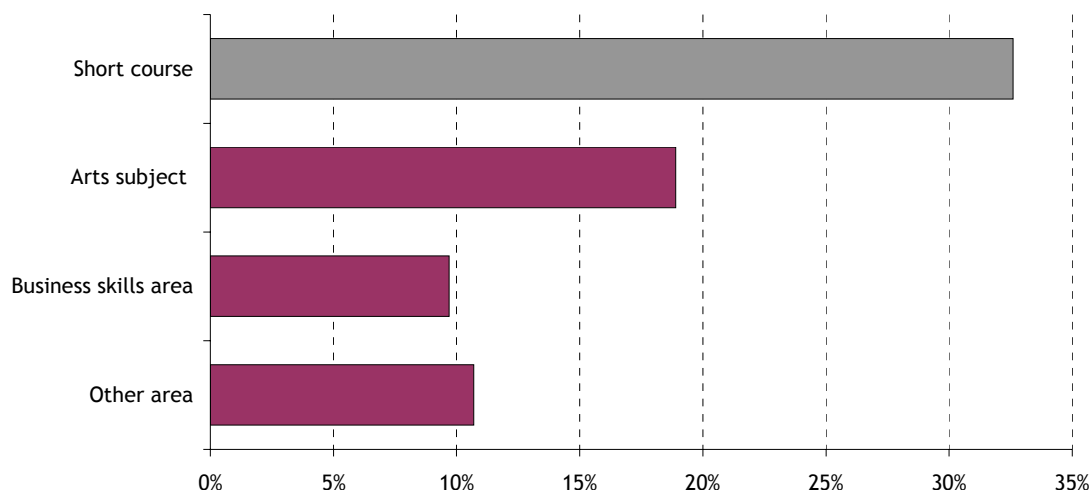
Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Table App. D6.7*

Key motivations in studying for a PGCE (Table 8.4) were to enhance job opportunities (87 per cent of those who studied for a PGCE only, and 87 per cent of those who combined PGCE study with other study during their early careers), obtain a professional qualification (of greater importance to PGCE students, 85 and 82 per cent), develop further skills and knowledge (61 and 76 per cent) and earn more money in the longer-term (again, relatively more important to PGCE students than to graduates engaging in other types of further study, 56 per cent for both groups). Undertaking a PGCE appears to be much less about developing creative practice (24 and 43 per cent), making contacts (nine and 13 per cent) or following a personal interest (37 and 52 per cent) than found for other forms of further study.

Chapter 6 explores patterns and choices relating to those who undertook a PGCE and went on to teach.

## 8.6 To what extent is further study about short courses?

**Figure 8.10: Exploring engagement in short courses at any time since graduating - type or focus of course**



Base: All respondents, N=3,478

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. D4.1*

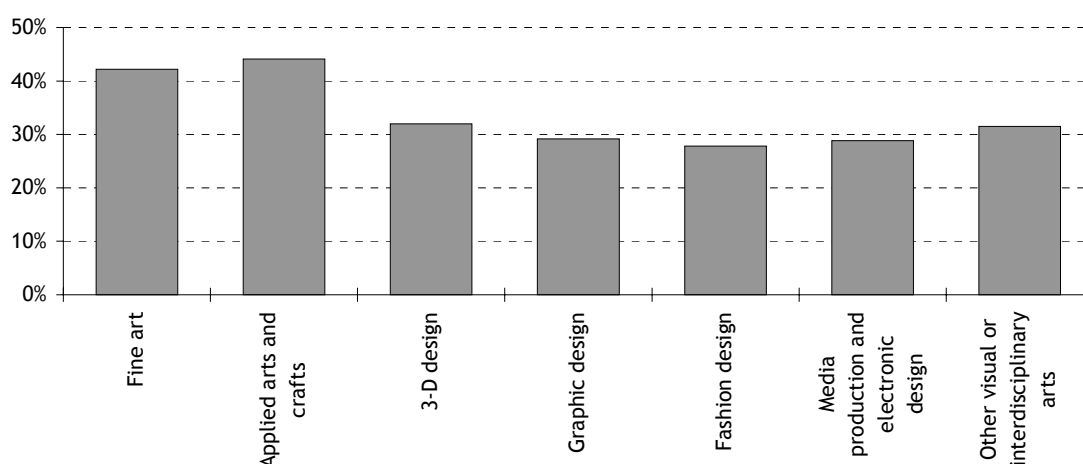
Graduates were asked whether they had undertaken any short courses since graduating, and if so, whether in an art, design, craft or media subject, in courses involving business skills and start up, or courses in other areas or subjects (see Figure 8.10). Over one thousand (1,135) graduates had taken at least one short course. These shorter courses proved to be the most popular form of study with around three out of five (61 per cent) of these learners having taken at least one short course. This represents one-third of all graduates (33 per cent, see Tables App. D4.1 and D3/4/5.1).

This is comparable with D&R, which found that 43 per cent of courses undertaken were non-postgraduate, general interest or short courses, the majority of which were taken on a part-time basis.

Older graduates were most likely to have undertaken a short course, and these individuals may place more importance on personal development than younger graduates, or may feel that short courses are easier to fit in with their other commitments than longer formal postgraduate courses, or it could be that their needs as career changers are different, perhaps with more interest in up-skilling. Almost half (46 per cent) of those aged 40 or older had engaged in a short course since graduating (see Table App. D4.2).

Of those undertaking further study, graduates from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were also more likely than those from white backgrounds to take a short course.

**Figure 8.11: Engagement in short courses at any time since graduating from first degree by original subject of study**



Base: All respondents, N=3,478

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. D4.3*

Looking at tendency to engage in short courses by initial study characteristics (Figure 8.11), those graduating with a lower class of degree (third or pass, 35 per cent) and those who had studied applied arts and crafts (44 per cent) or fine arts (42 per cent) were relatively more likely than those from other subjects to engage in short courses.

### 8.6.1 Type of short course

Graduates showed a strong tendency to undertake short courses close to their original subject, with almost one in five (19 per cent) of all graduates having taken a creative arts-related course since graduating (see Table App. D4.1). Those with a higher class of degree were more likely to take arts-related short courses. There was no difference between those who were students of UK, EU and Overseas domicile in their take up of short courses.

Business skills were important with the same proportion taking courses in this area as those undertaking a PGCE: one in ten (10 per cent) had taken a course to develop or enhance their business skills (see Table App. D4.1). One might expect to see a higher take-up in this area, bearing in mind that over half the respondents had experienced self-employment of some kind since graduating. Of those taking short courses, disabled and dyslexic graduates (41 per cent) were significantly more likely to undertake a business-related course than those without a disability (28 per cent), and this perhaps reflects the greater likelihood of dyslexic graduates engaging in some form of self-employment highlighted in the previous chapters, but is more likely to reflect the fact that disabled/dyslexic groups were more likely to undertake further study overall.

Graduates appeared to have wide interests with 11 per cent having undertaken a short skills course in another subject area including: maths or philosophy; courses in languages; vocational courses such as counselling, first aid, and others related to specific jobs; general computing; and teaching. This indicates that graduates appear to be well-rounded individuals and are keen to go on learning.

Some of the courses reported in the 'other' category also related to art, design, craft and media including IT and software, photography, printmaking and web-design; and areas related to professional practice such as project management, marketing, making presentations and health and safety.

Short courses are clearly an accessible option both in terms of time and funding and there is potential for graduates to receive further support for their portfolio careers in this way, particularly in relation to enhancing their freelance work and creative ventures.

## 8.7 How do graduates combine periods of study?

Graduates tended to access a mix of postgraduate study and short courses in their early careers (Table 8.5). Almost one-third (33 per cent) of all respondents had taken a short course since graduating, just over a quarter (28 per cent) had studied for a postgraduate qualification, with one in five (19 per cent) having followed some other type of course (ie neither postgraduate nor short course, see Table App. D3/4/5.1).

Figure 8.12 shows that just under a quarter (24 per cent) of those engaging in further study had taken a postgraduate course alone, one-third (32 per cent) had some combination of short skills or other course and postgraduate study, and two-fifths (44 per cent) had taken short and/or other courses (see Table App. D3/4/5.2).

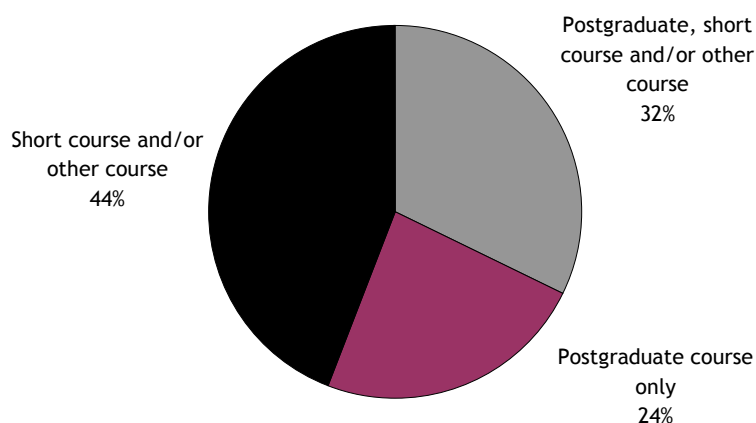
**Table 8.5: Type of further study**

	Frequency	% all	% further study
Post graduate course	955	27.5	51.4
Short course	1,135	32.6	61.1
Other course	651	18.7	35.0
<i>Base (N)</i>		<i>3,478</i>	<i>1,859</i>

Notes: Multiple response, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. D3/4/5.1*

**Figure 8.12: Exploring combinations of further study**



Base: all those engaged in further study (excl those where study type is unknown), N=1,672

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Tables App. D3/4/5.2*

## 8.8 Informal development activities

Our respondents demonstrated a predisposition for resourcefulness in developing themselves and their practice and life-long learning habits in more informal ways: 51 per cent have continued to develop their creative practice in some way, 35 per cent have studied independently and 42 per cent have undertaken voluntary work (see Table App. B1b.1 and Figure 6.1 in Chapter 6). Graduates are actively directing their own research and development, whether in the workplace or in their own time.

This picture is confirmed by a recent study of the careers of fine artists and their contribution to innovation, which demonstrated that 80 per cent had participated in informal learning; and this rose to 87 per cent of those whose primary job was in the arts/cultural sector (Bakshi et al., 2008).

Voluntary work is a common method of gaining entry into careers in the creative sector, and graduates in their early careers gain experience, develop new skills and improve prospects for paid employment in this way.

Almost one in five of our respondents have taken a career break (18 per cent), the nature of which may well be related to personal development and warrants further investigation.

## 8.9 Summary

- Creative graduates are lifelong learners, with further learning and development playing an important part in their portfolio careers. Just over half (54 per cent of respondents) described undertaking some form of formal study or training since graduating, with 15 per cent in formal study at the time of the survey (often in combination with work).
- Men were more likely than women to undertake further study, as were disabled graduates, those over 40, and those graduating earlier. Fine artists were the most likely subject group to undertake further study at 69 per cent.
- Over half of those undertaking further study had accumulated 12 months or more of study time (54 per cent); a further 16 per cent had studied for between six months and one year, and just under one-third had spent six months or less.
- Key motivations for further study were to develop skills and knowledge and enhance job opportunities, for personal interest and to develop one's creative practice. Very few did so to delay labour market entry or at the request of an employer, indicating graduates were making positive personal decisions for undertaking new learning, rather than addressing a deficit identified by an employer.

### Postgraduate study

- Over a quarter of all respondents had studied for a postgraduate qualification (28 per cent), most commonly at masters level or PGCE, and there was greater take-up in these two areas than in D&R.



- For those studying for a masters, the chance to follow a personal interest, develop their creative practice, make more contacts and decide on a career were all relatively more important than to those undertaking some other form of postgraduate study or short skills course.
- One in ten respondents had undertaken a PGCE and key reasons given were to gain a professional qualification and enhance careers and earnings potential.
- Less than one per cent of study was at doctorate level, indicating further capacity building is required in research communities in higher education to meet aspirations for developing new knowledge and innovation in these areas.

### Short courses

- One-third (33 per cent) of all graduates had undertaken a short course, and a greater proportion (almost twice as many) of graduates had taken a course in a creative arts subject than had taken a course in a business skills area.
- Older graduates, those with a disability, and the less academically successful in their first degrees were more likely to undertake short courses.
- Developing skills and knowledge, following an interest or studying at the request of an employer were all relatively more common motivating factors when undertaking short skills courses compared to postgraduate study.
- Short courses are clearly an accessible option both in terms of time and funding and there is potential for graduates to receive further support for their portfolio careers in this way, particularly in relation to enhancing their freelance work and creative ventures.

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## 9 Career aspirations and motivation

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This chapter:

- explores graduates' initial career goals upon graduation and whether and how these may have changed during their early careers
- looks at how well graduates' careers are developing and where the perceived barriers are to achieving career goals
- examines the values that graduates express in their career plans and what motivates them and explores graduates' next steps.

Graduates overwhelmingly aspire to creative careers, their specific career goals aligning with their subject discipline and their career plans most influenced by a desire for new learning. This is a strong indication that, despite the insecurities of portfolio working, the majority of graduates feel comfortable with working practices in the creative industries. Although the majority of graduates were in or close to their chosen career, most anticipated at least some change over the next phase of their career, most commonly further training or learning and some degree of upward progression. Very few anticipated a complete change of direction, and these preferences are confirmed by other studies (Glasgow School of Art, 2006).

In contrast, graduates in D&R were less satisfied in their current work than CGCF respondents, but nevertheless they were positive about the future, the majority thinking they would progress in their work, working towards an ideal job and anticipating some change to their working patterns in the future. In particular, those who were self-employed in D&R '*expect to be working towards the ideal job, or attaining it, but strongly anticipate doing the same as at present*' (Blackwell and Harvey, 1999, p.119) indicating that for those respondents, self-employment is not necessarily a stepping stone to employment.

## 9.1 What are graduates early career aspirations?

Respondents gave detailed comments about the kind of career they aspired to when they graduated, and overwhelmingly they wanted creative careers. The vast majority of graduates were clear about their career intentions and almost all gave very specific career aims or job aspirations, some prefixing this with the word *'successful'*:

*'A career where design can make a difference, whatever the specific discipline. And one that would give me personal satisfaction with the creative challenges faced, and good level of income.'*

*'I wanted to use my sewing, research, and design skills to create work independently that would allow me to showcase my creativity in a profitable way. I realized that I did not like the strict constraints of having to "work for someone else" or being at the mercy of a director's notion. I had and have enough faith in my creativity, taste and imagination, that I know a good thing when I see it. I didn't want to compromise that in my work. I would not have been happy.'*

Some graduates also spelled out the route they anticipated taking in their early careers:

*'First to work in a design agency as a project manager and long-term to set up a new agency.'*

*'I wanted to be a graphic designer in a studio making work I was proud of and that was meaningful for a few years and then go into teaching in HE.'*

For others, their degree experiences had been instrumental in changing from their original aspirations when they started their courses:

*'Throughout Uni I wanted to either get into furniture design or interior design. Initially I was more interested in furniture design but after my work placement in the summer of 2003 I realised there was more opportunities in interior design so went down that path.'*

Around one in ten graduates were interested in a general creative career – wanting work that would allow them to use the knowledge and skills they had gained and to be creative. They were unsure of exactly where this might be or what it would look like:

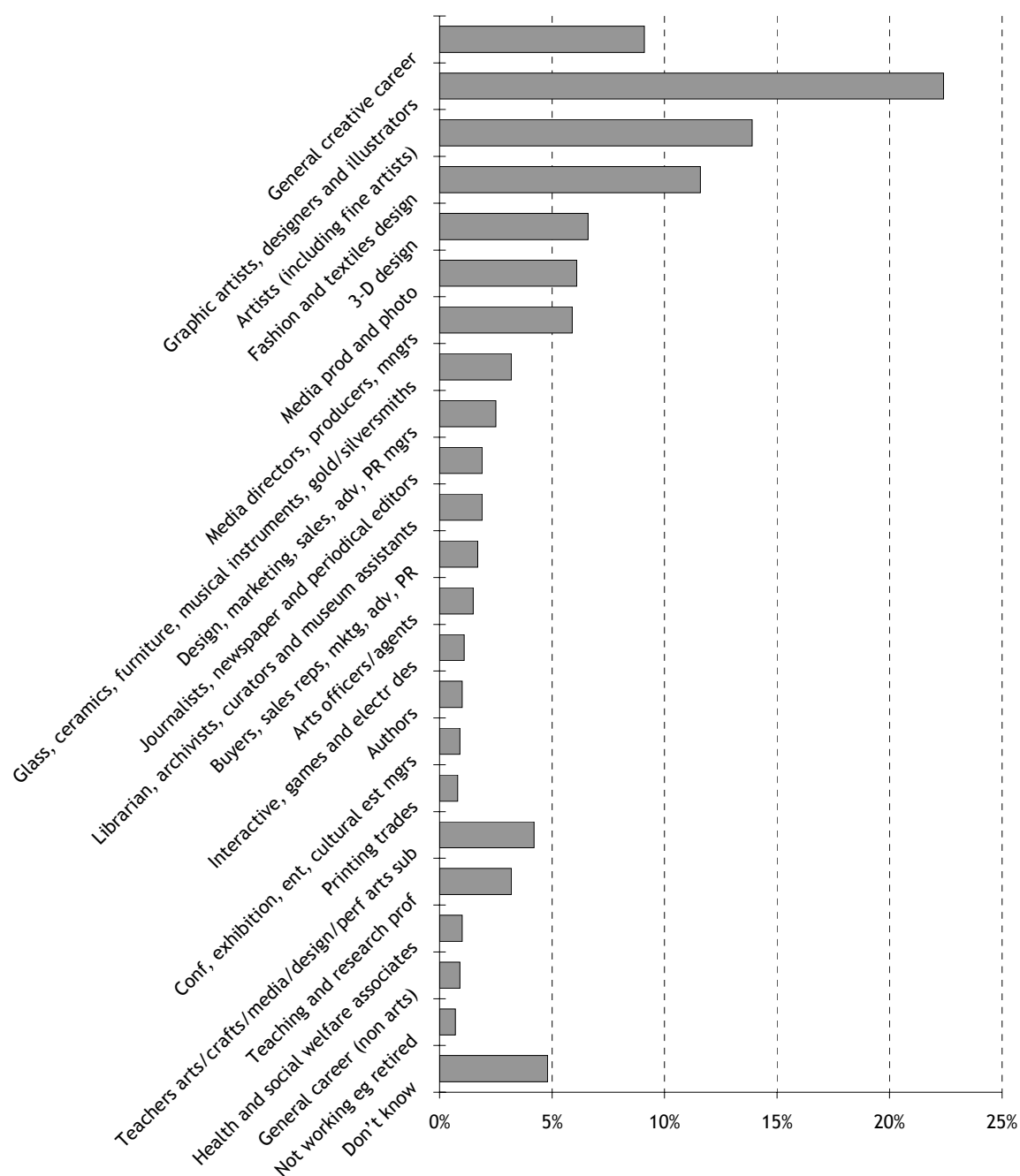
*'A career in the arts, in terms of administrative duties in order to pay the bills alongside a professional arts practice, both independently and collaboratively.'*

*'Working within community arts somehow.'*

*'To work within a creative environment, to learn and develop in my role and influence others.'*

Respondents' career and job goals were coded using an occupational classification (as in Chapter 7) to produce a list of the most common (see Figure 9.1 and also Table App. E1.1).

Occupations closely related to art, design, craft and media dominate and closely correspond to the profile of current activities of graduates (using main work activity as in Chapter 7) although it would seem that buying/marketing and advertising roles and teaching occupations are more prevalent than initially anticipated (Table 9.1).

**Figure 9.1: Most commonly cited initial career or job goal (upon graduation)**

Note: Occupational coding based around Standard Occupational Codes (SOC), occupations with less than 20 are not reported.

Note: Multiple response question, therefore the sum % may be greater than 100.

Base: All those giving a goal, N=3,313

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App.E1.1*

**Table 9.1: Top 10 career goals (upon graduation) and top 10 actual occupations (at time of survey)**

Rank	Initial goal	Actual (main) occupation	Rank
1	Graphic artists/designers/illustrators	Graphic artists/designers/illustrators	1
2	Artists	Artists	2
3	Fashion and textiles design	Teaching/research	3
4	Teaching/research	Fashion and textiles design	4
5	3-D design	Media production and photography	5
6	Media production and photography	3-D design	6
7	Media directors/producers and managers (film, TV, radio)	Buyers/sales reps/marketing/advertising/PR and auctioneers	7
8	Makers (glass/ceramics/furniture/musical instrument makers and gold/silversmiths)	Design, marketing, sales, advertising and PR managers	8
9	Design, marketing, sales, advertising and PR managers	Other business and public service associate professionals	9
10	Journalists, newspaper and periodical editors, and broadcasters	Managers and senior officials	10
<i>Base</i>	3,313	2,450	

Note: Occupational coding based around Standard Occupational Codes (SOC)

Base: Those giving a specific or general career or job goal (initial goal); those reporting work-related activities

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010; Table App. E1.2*

Career goals closely reflect the pattern of study, and demonstrate that graduates stay close to their disciplines. The most common career goals by subject of degree study were:

- **Fine art:** generic artists (43 per cent), fine artists (ten per cent).
- **Applied arts and crafts:** craft maker (31 per cent), fashion/textile designer (12 per cent).
- **3-D design:** designers (30 per cent), graphic artists (23 per cent).
- **Graphic design:** graphic artist (59 per cent), design manager (five per cent).
- **Fashion and textile design:** fashion/textile designer (47 per cent), graphic artist (13 per cent).
- **Media production and electronic design:** media production (29 per cent), media directing/producing/managing (25 per cent).
- **Other visual and inter-disciplinary arts:** this group had more dispersed career goals but the most commonly cited were authors (10 per cent), and designers (eight per cent).

## 9.2 How do we understand career ambitions?

The majority were positive and optimistic about their careers with a small minority expressing more negative views, the balance being reflected in the high proportions of graduates (79 per cent) stating they were in their chosen career or close to achieving it (as discussed in Section 9.4 below, see also Table App. E3.1).

### Evidence of clear goals and pathways

Graduates' more detailed comments provided an interesting insight into early goals and experiences. Career ambitions reflected the motivating factors and values graduates were working towards – wanting to be successful and established, to earn a living from their work and make use of their skills and experiences. It was also important for them to gain personal satisfaction, to be challenged and to challenge others, and help others/contribute to the community:

*'To become a graphic designer and illustrator doing work I find interesting and fulfilling. To meet new people, learn new things, embrace every opportunity that comes my way, make things happen for myself and work VERY hard.'*

*'To work as an artist in a way which benefits the community and allows me to continue growing and learning.'*

In some cases, graduates specified particular aspects of a work situation they were hoping to achieve, in terms of hours, employment contract (permanent work), or setting.

In many cases, graduates also specified the type of employer they wanted to work for or the kinds of work they wanted to do:

*'I wanted to be the driving force behind changing fashion in my country. Hence I took up my career with India's leading value format where in today we are at 105 stores in 4 yrs.'*

*'Working within a creative form of 3D, maybe not product design, but 3D animation.'*

*'Working for a good agency which had an interesting range of clients, somewhere that would seek to develop me further and see me as an important resource.'*

### Importance of self-employment and portfolio careers

Aiming for self-employment was important, sometimes wanting to work independently right from the start or expecting to progress to setting up their own businesses after gaining some experience:

*'To set up a small business, freedom to make own decisions.'*

*'To work for some time as an employee in creative department/studio and then work as a freelancer and finally create my own company/studio.'*

*'Working in the fashion industry to gain experience, then starting my own fashion brand when I feel ready.'*

Interestingly some graduates referred specifically to portfolio careers, combining work (often teaching) with creative practice:

*'Continuing in civil engineering while developing studio practice.'*

*'Graphic Designer in a studio to become a creative director / have my own business and to create children's books in my own time.'*

*'I wanted to sell works of art as a profession as I am very passionate about this subject. Then take this forward into the teaching industry whilst continuing to produce works of art.'*

*'It has always been my intention to combine my own art practice with work at foundation level of HE.'*

### Influence of degree course on goals

A very small proportion of graduates who had had negative experiences on their courses expressed a desire to distance themselves from creative practice:

*'After finishing my degree I aspired to be as far away from the jewellery world as possible after I and most other students on my course had been completely put off by our degree and felt let down by our tutor. However due to being asked to take part in two exhibitions ... I felt I had to set up and make jewellery for these shows. I am extremely pleased I did as have been making since and have been teaching myself the skills I did not gain through my degree since and would be lost if I was not a jeweller, it is my life.'*

On a more positive note, for others, their degree experience had been instrumental in changing their career goals:

*'... achieving a degree helps you to develop over the period of 3 years and make realisations. I realised my degree wasn't entirely the correct one for the aspirations I had in mind. But it was still vital, as it prepared me for ways of working. My goals were to become a successful and respected visual effects (vfx) artist in what is becoming an increasingly competitive industry.'*

*'... anything but graphic design, by the end of course I realised I didn't want to be a graphic designer. I wanted to work in the film industry.'*

### Challenges in moving on from higher education

For a small minority, comments reflected the difficulties of making the transition from higher education to work, being unsure of their direction or feeling 'lost':

*'I was ill-prepared for the creative industries when I left my first degree. I had a broad range of skills in graphics, illustration, photography and fashion. I had lots of ideas and energy, but no idea how to earn an income from these. I wished to own my own business, shop, be a freelance illustrator or work on a magazine. I wished I had known that you have to have one goal and go for it with confidence. I wish my undergraduate degree had offered more support and local opportunities.'*

Lack of advice, feeling unconfident and unprepared for the workplace were commonly cited. Some of the more negative comments also reflected a lack of pro-activity and resourcefulness:

*'At that point my confidence had taken a battering and I really did not know where to turn to next, I really didn't know what I wanted to do.'*

*'I didn't really have any [career aspirations] as I didn't know what I wanted to do. My ideal would have been a job in web design but I didn't leave with the confidence or skills to pursue this.'*

*'Unfortunately, as we had very little career advice guidance, I didn't know what type of jobs were available to me and I didn't know where to search for this.'*

Others reported the difficulties of finding work, having to change their plans or lowering their aspirations upon graduating by working unpaid to gain experience, or taking other work to ensure a regular income and to begin to pay back student loan debts:

*'I was expecting to work as a design assistant ... I have found many jobs, and I have been successful at the interview but unfortunately they only pay for my travel and they want me there four days per week .... I cannot afford to live on a part-time job, I have bills and student loans to pay back and rent!!! I am very disappointed, only my wealthy classmates are now doing internships because they can afford to not be paid!'*

*'I wanted to be a designer/pattern cutter but needed money so went into the wholesale manufacturers' side to get a job.'*

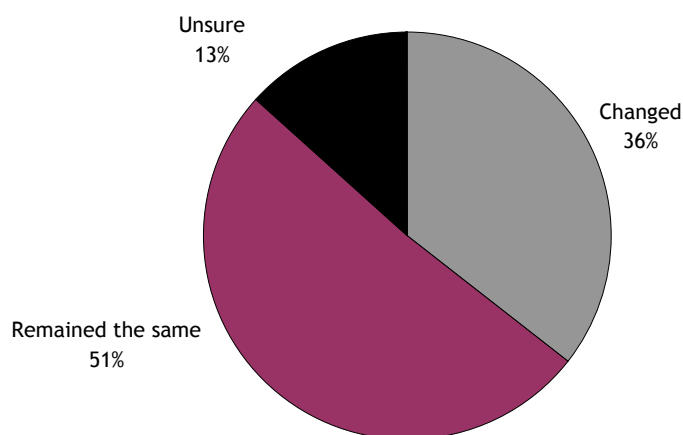
For some this meant moving away from creative occupations or industries:

*'By the time I finished my BA I was very unsure about how to develop a career, and about what direction to follow. I felt that a career on the creating end in the creative industries was no longer what I wanted.'*

### 9.3 To what extent do graduates change their goals?

Half (51 per cent) of the respondents were settled on their career goals – having the same goals as when they had graduated (see Figure 9.2). Just over one-third (36 per cent) reported changing goals since finishing their undergraduate studies and 13 per cent were unsure whether they had changed their goals in their early careers.

**Figure 9.2: Changes in career goals since graduating**



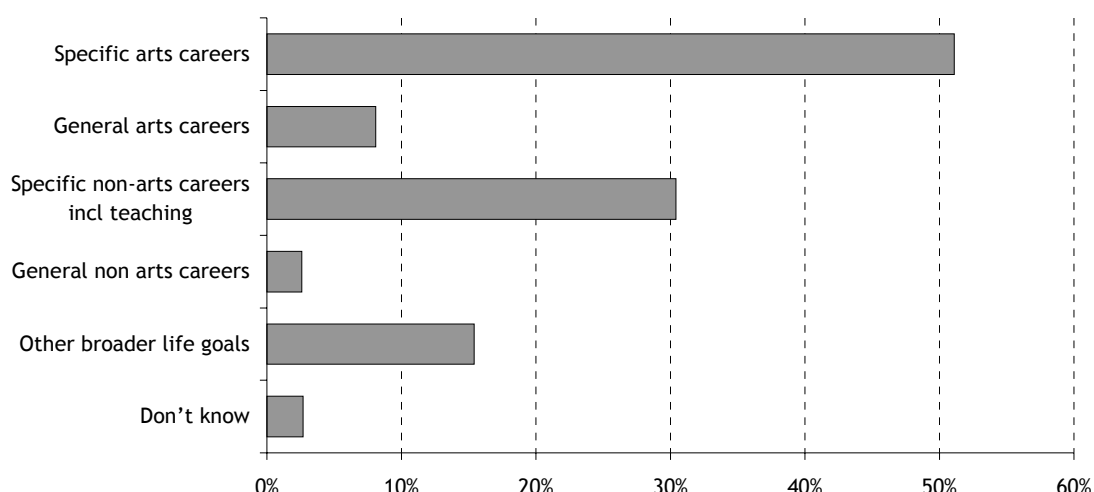
Base: All respondents (answering the question), N=3,419

Source: Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. E2.1



The themes emerging from those changing their ambitions follow those outlined above, with the majority reporting specific occupations and a small minority noting how their early experiences had influenced their later aspirations both positively and negatively.

**Figure 9.3: New career aspirations**



Note: Multiple response question, therefore the sum % may be greater than 100

Base: All those who changed their initial career goals (answering the question), N=1,187

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. E2.2*

The majority of those who had changed their ambitions had specific occupations in mind (Figure 9.3) and these were often the role that they were now in, in which they were experiencing a high degree of satisfaction (suggesting a successful career move). There was some indication of movement away from creative occupations, most commonly towards teaching – which arguably is a creative role. More than one in ten of those changing goals indicated that they wanted to teach or lecture (often in combination with other work). Some also talked about health and community work and office-based work. In many cases graduates still felt they were using their creative skills in these wider occupations:

*'I have it! I have a stable job designing, doing something I love, with (at the moment) very good potential career prospects.'*

*'I am now a professional Youth Worker. I bring my creativity and photography skills into the sessions I deliver and have launched successful funding bids to equip some youth centres with photo/media equipment to enrich young people's experiences.'*

*'I now thoroughly enjoy working in healthcare and the opportunities I have to use my creative skills.'*

Some reported how positive experiences in their early careers had opened up new opportunities:

*'I broadened my approach and started studying other areas in art that I never would have thought I could do such as acting. I was always interested in photography and film but eventually I got curious and wanted to know about what's it like to be on the other side of the camera.'*

*'I currently work in music management - managing and developing bands. This came from part-time record label work, and producing music-related artwork also assisted in where I am today.'*

*'They [goals] haven't so much changed, as expanded. I did find I liked leading children's workshops so I am doing more of that. I am doing DTP design work that I didn't realise I would have the opportunity to do and I have been involved in collaborative art projects. Now I would like to further my involvement with all of these areas and possibly move into linking my work to a greater degree with community involvement, particularly around our local art gallery.'*

However a small number of others talked of quite challenging and frustrating experiences, causing them to rethink their plans:

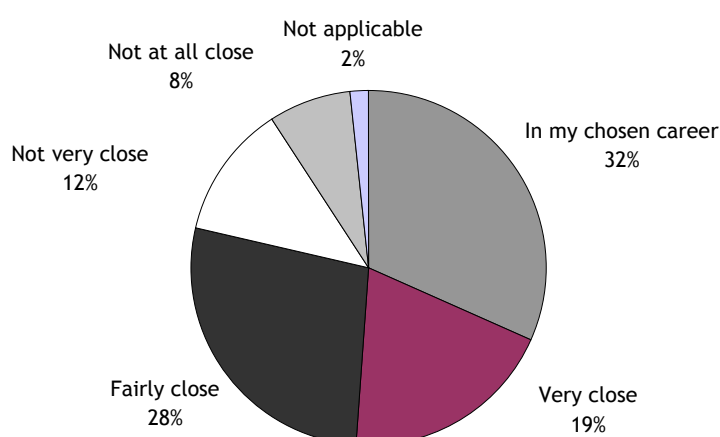
*'I thought when I left university I would easily gain employment, having been awarded a first in my discipline. After not being successful in my first choice [studio designer garment, mid market], I continued to apply for various jobs related to my degree: buying, furniture design, lighting design, design assistant etc. .... I applied for between 20 and 50 jobs a week for two years then gave up. Once I browse and apply for design jobs and/or buying jobs, needless to say I don't get replies.'*

## 9.4 Do graduates reach their goals?

Almost one-third (32 per cent) of all graduates (whether in work or not) were, at the time of the survey in their chosen career, and a further 47 per cent felt they were very or fairly close to achieving it (Figure 9.4).

However one in five (20 per cent) felt they had some way to go, and it is worth noting this is similar in proportion to the 24 per cent of those in work who felt they were under-employed (see Chapter 7). Graduates who had changed their career goals during their early careers were less likely to have achieved their goals, and those unsure of their aspirations have the furthest to travel (see Table App. E3.2).

**Figure 9.4: Proximity to career goals**



Base: All respondents (answering the question), N=3,432

Source: Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. E3.1

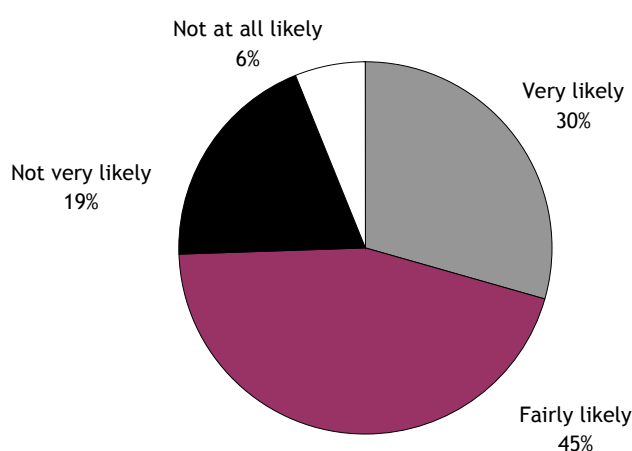
The likelihood of achieving one's goals appeared to differ by personal and study background and work activity. This is summarised below (see also Tables App. E3.3, E3.4 and E3.5).

More likely to have realised career ambitions	Less likely to have realised career ambitions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Those working in creative roles in creative industries, another indication of how graduates' career aspirations were strongly linked to creative roles in creative industries</li> <li>Men</li> <li>Graduates in earlier years and with longer potential time in the labour market - indicating that careers do progress over time</li> <li>Graduates from EU countries (outside of the UK) compared to home (UK) graduates</li> <li>Graduates from 3D and graphic design.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Older graduates, only 23 per cent were reported to be in their chosen career compared to over 30 per cent of graduates in their 20s. This links to concerns about age relating to barriers to career progression outlined below</li> <li>Women</li> <li>Disabled graduates and those with no family experience of HE (a proxy for lower socio-economic background)</li> <li>Graduates achieving a lower class of degree</li> <li>Graduates from fine arts, applied arts and crafts, and media production and electronic design.</li> </ul>

## 9.5 What are the barriers to career progression?

Although 79 per cent of respondents had reached or were close to achieving their career goals by the time of the survey (between four and six years after graduation), those who were still working towards realising their ambitions were optimistic that they would achieve them within the next five years – particularly those who felt they were almost there at the time of the survey (Figure 9.5).

**Figure 9.5: Likelihood of achieving career goals**

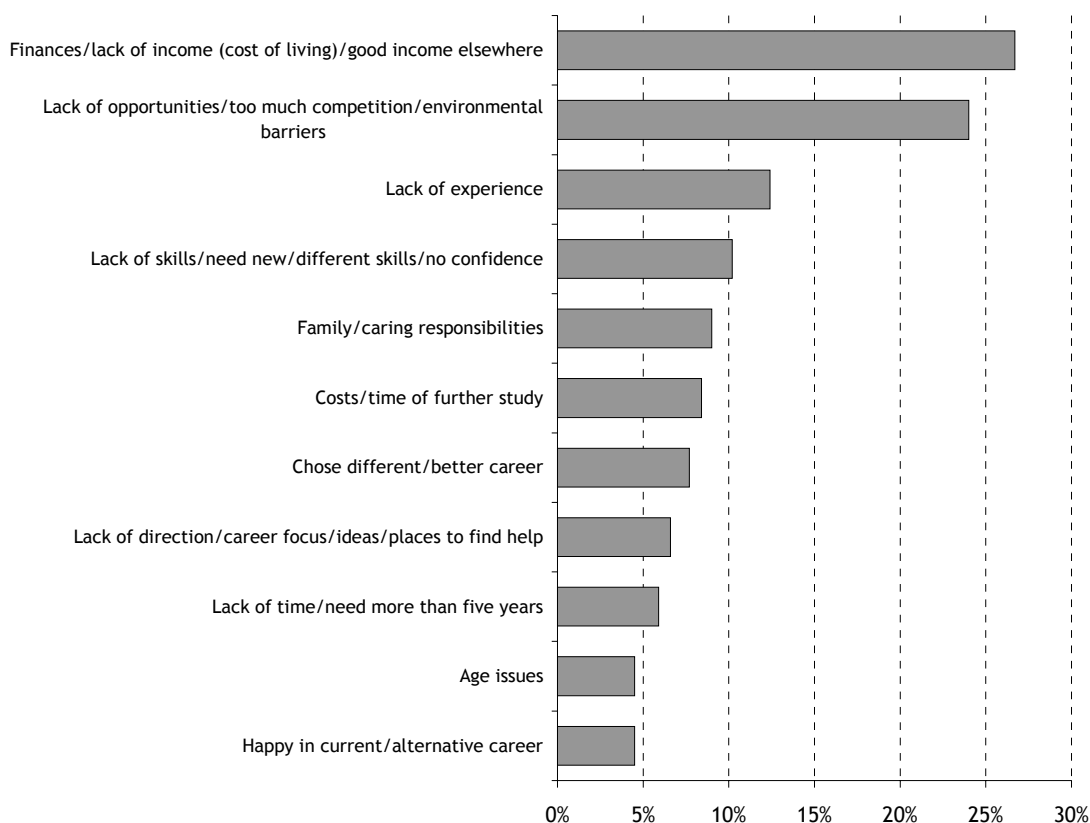


Base: All those not yet in their chosen career, N=1,850

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures*, IES, 2010, Table App. E4.1

A quarter of those who were not yet in their chosen career (14 per cent of all respondents) felt it was not at all or not very likely that they would do so in the near future. These graduates were asked why they thought this was the case and the most commonly cited career barriers centred around a lack of finance and opportunities (Figure 9.6).

**Figure 9.6: Barriers to achieving careers goals**



Notes: Multiple response variable, therefore sum % greater than 100

Note: Barriers cited by less than 20 individuals are not shown

Base: Those not yet in their chosen career and feel they are unlikely to achieve it in the next five years (not at all likely or not very likely), N=442

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. E5.1*

In many cases, individuals with family and other financial commitments felt unable to move from a relatively secure or well-paid job to 'risk' moving into their chosen career or taking on a secondary creative role:

*'Financially, I would find it difficult to paint full-time. Studio costs are high in conjunction with living costs, I can't see how it will be possible. I can imagine that painting and drawing will most likely be secondary to my teaching.'*

*'Need regular income to appease bank manager, so will have to balance day job with craft interest. Ideally work 4 days to allow more time for making.'*

*'My full-time occupation currently allows me to be creative but has no scope for me to be artistic. This will not change. I need to be able to pay my mortgage and other bills so realistically cannot currently pursue my dream.'*

*'Time and commitment. I have a full-time job, which is comfortable, but is not my chosen career and takes up a bit of time. To really give it a go following my 'chosen career' would take all my commitment and be a financial risk. Self-confidence probably figures in there too!'*

Many barriers were inter-related: perceived lack of opportunities coupled with too much competition, difficulties breaking into an area, being too old, too long out of university, or lacking the right connections, particularly with signs of an impending recession.

*'I am running out of time to learn the necessary skills for a design job and I have little confidence of my skills in illustration. Young graduates are appearing all the time and I am not what this fashionable industry wants at the moment.'*

*'Having a child (single parent) and the pressures that brings. Lacking confidence, feeling like I'm one of many thousands trying to break into a world I am not familiar with. Being older and already having had a career in a professional world I grew up with. Now I am a very small fish in a very big sea.'*

*'Looking back, I think these jobs are so competitive that employers can pick the cream of the crop. There are no such opportunities in my area so I had to train further in software that seemed to be advertised in job papers frequently. It was this that got me a trainee position and not so much my degree course.'*

*'Because I am 32 now (I was a mature student with 2 kids at the time I studied for my BA) it has been a great achievement for me to have "caught up with" my peers in the work environment, despite being several years behind many of them on the career ladder. However breaking into advertising is nearly impossible. Most climb in from internship level and work their way up through various agencies gaining experience. What I do now has many of the elements of what an advertising creative does: art direct, brainstorming, group work, mood-boards, commission, client, the production element etc. etc., but getting through the door at 32 and managing to support my kids and pay the mortgage means I am kind of tied to where I am.'*

Some reported feeling they lacked either the right skills or experience for the careers they wanted to pursue, and that their degree had not been enough and they would need further skills and/or qualifications (which they could not afford to undertake).

*'Competition is rife, vacancies are sparse and very low paid. I feel I would need a post graduate degree which I am unable to afford as I am still in extreme debt from my first degree.'*

Graduates noted that much vital work experience is unpaid or low paid, and also difficult to find – creating a 'catch 22' position where in order to get work experience they needed work experience:

*'Despite qualifications and additional courses no one in the job market will give me a chance at anything because I haven't done their jobs before or have not had experience, and no one will give me experience.'*

*'Practicalities of needing to pay bills etc, in order to get into the industry, it's a sad fact that you have to work for free or very little to get your foot in the door.'*

*'I hoped to work in an ad agency, but didn't have the first clue how to "break in". I felt that my tutors failed me somewhat in the final year and my degree pass suffered as a result. Despite this I went straight into work experience and employment and have worked in the magazine sector, more recently going freelance and working in advertising and some video production also. But I do feel we could have been better equipped with the dull skills required for work. It was all about ideas, which left us with very little CV substance. The support for undergraduates with kids and financial problems wasn't*

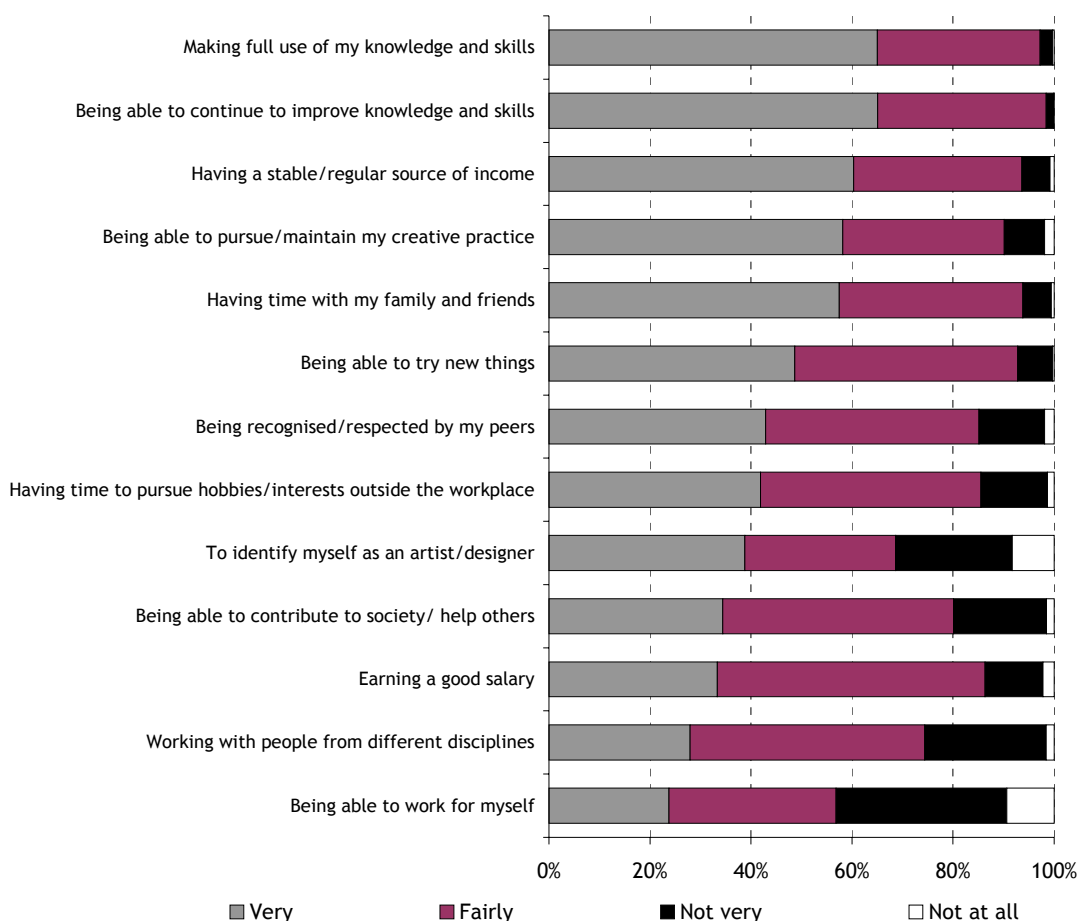
*great either and I always felt that their lack of understanding on the matters impaired my progress also.'*

*'Ideally I wanted to continue with studying but at the time financially I couldn't afford it, I wanted a career in Fashion Marketing but have continued to struggle to get into this industry without any direct marketing experience hence why I am currently unemployed.'*

## 9.6 What motivates graduates?

Graduates were asked about the relative importance of factors influencing career decisions (Figure 9.7). Using and developing knowledge and skill (65 per cent), having a stable income (60 per cent), pursuing creative practice and having time with family and friends (both 58 per cent) were considered to be very important. Graduates were also keen to try new things (49 per cent considered this to be very important).

**Figure 9.7: Career motivators - importance of factors in career decisions**



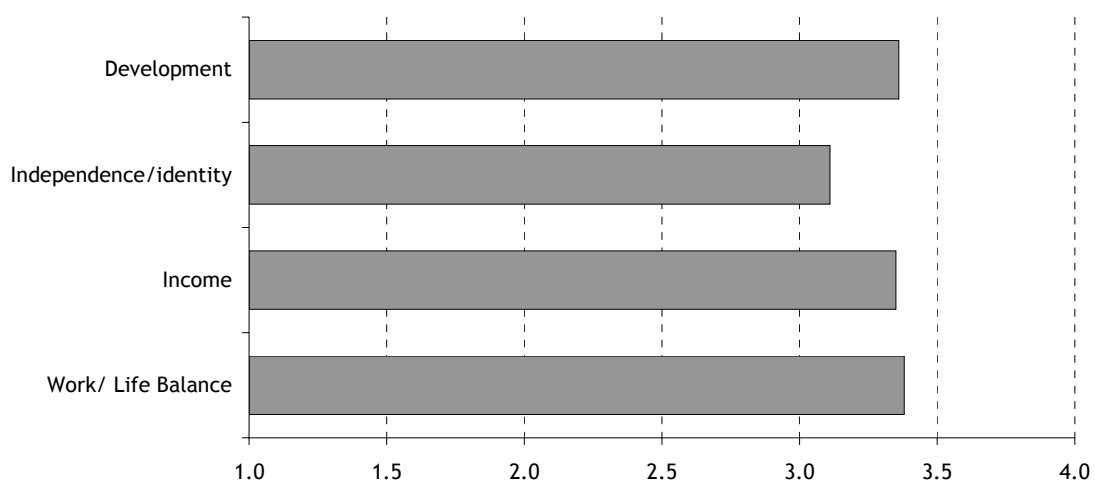
Base: All respondents (answering the question)

Source: Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. E6.1

Working for oneself or identifying oneself as an artist or designer were relatively less important overall – with 24 per cent and 39 per cent respectively citing these as very important and around one in ten reporting these as not important at all, although, self-employment was an important aspiration for the future (see Section 9.8 below).

Other motivators reported by graduates included working in the right environment and this related to working hours, location and opportunities to progress; being happy and satisfied, linked to being confident, creative, undertaking meaningful work that they were proud of, and being in a suitable role; and achieving external success through respect/recognition, being remembered and making a mark, and being able support themselves through their work.

**Figure 9.8: Key career motivators**



Base: All respondents (answering the question)

Note: Where 1=not at all, 2=not very, 3=fairly, and 4=very. The higher the mean score the more important the driver/motivator.

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Tables App. E6.2, E6.3, E6.4 and E6.5*

These potential career motivators can be clustered into four groups or factors using a statistical technique. We can use these four new motivators to explore their relative importance to graduates with different backgrounds and study experiences. The first three were very close in terms of mean scores for importance above 3.35 (out of 4), with independence/identity scoring slightly lower at 3.11 (see Figure 9.8 and also Tables App. E6.2, E6.3, E6.4 and E6.5):

The groups cover motivating factors relating to:

1. **Work/life balance** – having time to spend with family and friends and to pursue hobbies and interests outside of the workplace. This was the most important influence on career decisions and was particularly important to women (most important motivator), younger graduates, graduates from the UK, those whose parents went to HE and to graduates from graphic design and fashion design (see Tables App. E6.6 and E6.7).



2. **Development** – includes using and building on skills, trying new things, working with different people and helping others. This was the second most important set of motivators. There was little difference in the relative importance of this set of development factors, and this was generally important for graduates across the board. However it was relatively more important to both women and graduates from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, compared to their peers, when making career decisions (see Table App. E6.6).
3. **Income** – having a good and/or regular source of income was third most important. This was relatively more important to younger graduates than their older peers and indeed was their most important career motivator. It was also relatively more important to home graduates (from the UK), those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, those whose parents did not go to HE (a proxy for lower socio-economic background), those with lower class degrees, and those from design disciplines (3-D design, graphic design and fashion design). It is interesting to note that this tended to have the lowest influence on graduates from fine art courses (see Tables App. E6.6 and E6.7).
4. **Independence/identity** – includes wanting to work for oneself, pursuing creative practice, identifying oneself as an artist or designer, and a desire to be recognised or respected by one's peers. This had the least influence on graduates' decisions and plans. However, it appeared to be the greatest motivating force for older graduates alongside development motivators. It was also relatively more important to graduates from EU or overseas, disabled graduates, and those from black and ethnic minority backgrounds when making career decisions. Independence and identity was also relatively more important to those most successful in their studies and also those least successful (those with a first class degree or a third class or pass); and to graduates from fine art and applied arts and crafts disciplines. It was of much less importance to those from media production and electronic design courses and to graduates from other visual and interdisciplinary arts (see Tables App. E6.6 and E6.7).

It is interesting to note that there was no difference in the relative importance of these career motivators on those graduating in different years – indicating that these motivators remain stable over time.

Exploring some of the individual career motivators in a little more detail revealed that higher earners tended to rate earning a good salary as more important in their career decisions than those with lower incomes (see Table App. E6.8). Similarly, those who were motivated by the desire to 'work for oneself' were considerably more likely to be doing so (see Table App. E6.9).

## 9.7 How do graduates expect their careers to progress over time?

Graduates anticipated some element of change over the next few years as their careers developed (Figure 9.10), most commonly involving personal development (82 per cent anticipating undertaking training or learning new skills) and some form of promotion (in that they would be working in a higher level job in the same career, 79 per cent). However, over two-thirds (69 per cent) felt they would be doing the same thing as present which

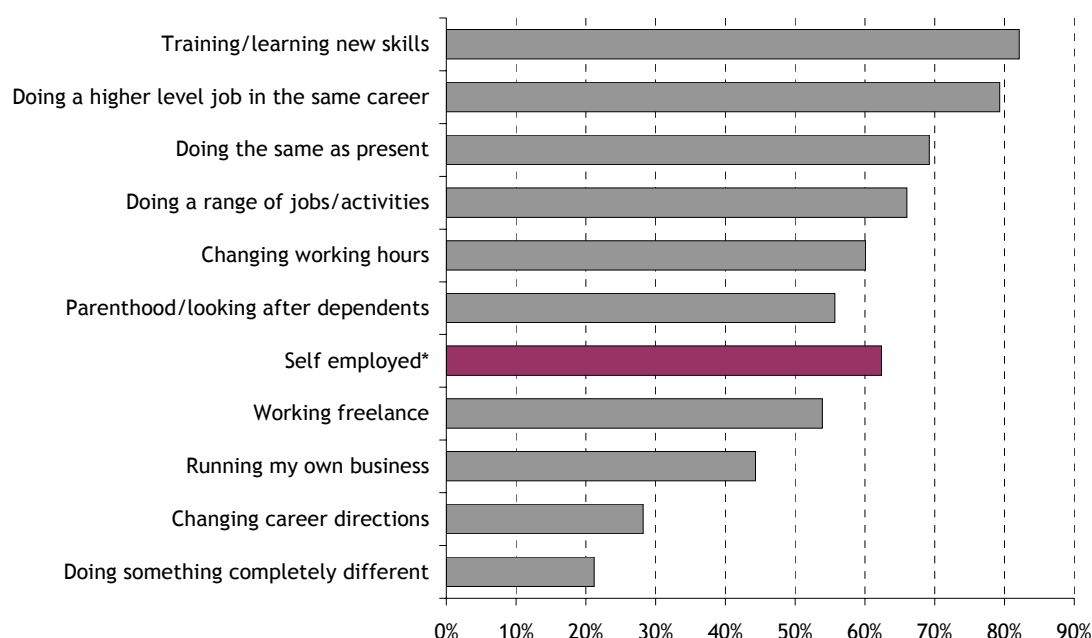


corresponds to the high proportion of individuals who were in or very close to their chosen career and to the high proportion who were generally satisfied with their working situation.

Smaller proportions anticipated a complete change of direction, either changing career direction (28 per cent) which, as indicated above, can take time to achieve, or doing something completely different (21 per cent).

There is an indication of continued portfolio working with two in three graduates (66 per cent) anticipating doing a range of jobs and activities. There is strong interest in self-employment with more than three in five graduates (62 per cent) expecting to be self-employed during the next five years: over half of all respondents (54 per cent) expected to be working freelance (either to take this up or to continue with this mode of work) and two in five (44 per cent) thought it likely they would be running (or continuing to run) their own business (see Table App. E7.1).

**Figure 9.9: Anticipated activities within the next five years**



Note: \*this has been derived from either freelance or running own business

Base: All respondents (answering the question)

Source: *Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010, Table App. E7.1*

### Activities over the next five years

Generally, graduates anticipating no change over the next five years tended to be older (77 per cent of those aged 40 or older) and those who graduated earlier (72 per cent of those graduating in 2002) – both groups are more likely to be already established in their careers. Similarly, those without disabilities (70 per cent) and from white backgrounds (70 per cent) were relatively more likely than others to anticipate staying in the same work.

Conversely, those groups with a relatively greater tendency to anticipate a change – either in career direction or to do something completely different (possibly outside of the labour market) – were from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (37 per cent anticipated changing direction and 30 per cent anticipated something different), with a lower class of degree (38 per cent change of direction and 34 per cent something different), and women (changing career direction only, 29 per cent).

There is a suggestion that those not in creative work still have aspirations for more creative working, as this group were considerably more likely to anticipate changing direction (31 per cent of those not in a creative role, 35 per cent of those not in the creative sector) (Tables App. E7.2, E7.3 and E7.4).

### Changes to work situation

In terms of work situation, men (85 per cent), younger graduates (87 per cent of those 25 or younger), EU graduates (87 per cent), and those whose parents had been to HE (81 per cent) were more likely than others to anticipate some form of promotion in the next few years – feeling that their careers would progress over time. Also graduates from graphic design (84 per cent), fashion design (82 per cent) and media production and electronic design (82 per cent) were relatively more likely to expect promotion than those from other disciplines.

Women were more likely than men to anticipate change in their hours of work (61 per cent), as were those with disabilities (including dyslexia, 68 per cent) and those from fine art and applied arts and crafts disciplines (68 per cent for both), and this may reflect their greater tendency to work part-time. Those not in a permanent job, in a temporary or unpaid position, or self-employed were the most likely to anticipate changing their working hours (66, 67, 70 and 68 per cent respectively) (see Tables App. E7.2, E7.3 and E7.4).

### Continuing professional development

Most graduates anticipated development of some kind, and those who were most likely to anticipate training and learning new skills in relation to others were from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (86 per cent), those with a lower class of degree (84 per cent with either a lower second, third or pass) and those from fine art disciplines and other visual and interdisciplinary arts (85 and 86 per cent respectively) (see Tables App. E7.2 and E7.3).

### Portfolio working

Those who were relatively more likely to anticipate doing a range of jobs or activities were: international students (from EU or wider overseas, 72 and 70 per cent), disabled graduates (73 per cent of those with dyslexia and 81 per cent of those with other disabilities), those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (73 per cent), and those with parents who went to university (a proxy for higher social class, 69 per cent). Similarly, graduates in fine art and applied arts and crafts disciplines were relatively more likely to anticipate working across a range of activities in the near future (75 and 72 per

cent respectively). Those not working in a permanent job or in temporary or unpaid work were most likely to anticipate doing a range of jobs/activities over the next few years (78, 79 and 86 per cent respectively). These individuals are most likely to be portfolio workers and so expect to continue to do so (see Tables App. E7.2, E7.3 and E7.4).

### Self-employment

As noted above, around three-fifths of graduates anticipated some form of self-employment, either running their own business or working freelance. These two aspects of self-employment were significantly correlated – with two-thirds of those anticipating working freelance also expecting to run their own business, and four out of five of those running their own business also expecting to be working freelance.

Those relatively more likely to be anticipating self-employment were: men (67 per cent), older graduates (78 per cent), those from EU or overseas (78 and 80 per cent), disabled graduates (working freelance, 60 per cent), those with parents who had been to university (a proxy for higher socio-economic background, 67 per cent) and those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (72 per cent). Graduates from fine art courses (69 per cent) were also more likely than those from other courses (particularly from 3-D design or fashion design, 59 and 56 per cent) to anticipate self-employment. Applied arts and crafts graduates were also relatively more likely to anticipate running their own business in the next few years (51 per cent), as were both those who were most successful in their degree studies and those least successful (achieving a first class honours or a third/pass, 49 and 53 per cent respectively).

Graduates in a temporary or unpaid role (78 and 79 per cent) were more likely to anticipate freelance work and/or running their own business, considerably more so than those in some form of permanent paid employment (55 per cent). However, those most likely to anticipate self-employment over the next few years were those who were already self-employed (94 per cent) – so this group in the main anticipate carrying on with their freelance work and/or running their own businesses (see Tables App. E7.2, E7.3 and E7.4.)

### Looking after dependents

Just over half the graduates (56 per cent) anticipated they would be looking after children/other dependents in the next five years, which may be an indication of the life-stage of graduates – in that they are anticipating starting families in their early thirties.

Unsurprisingly, women were considerably more likely to anticipate this kind of activity than men (60 per cent of women compared to 40 per cent of men). The likelihood of caring appeared to increase with age but fell after the age of 40 (63 per cent for those in their 30s and 39 per cent for those 40 or older) (see Table App. E7.2).

## 9.8 Summary

- The vast majority of graduates were clear about their career intentions at the point of graduation. Graduates overwhelmingly aspired to creative careers, and their specific goals tended to align with their subject discipline.
- Half of all graduates were settled on their career goals – having the same goals as when they had graduated. Just over one-third (36 per cent) reported changing goals since finishing their undergraduate studies and 13 per cent were unsure whether they had changed their goals in their early careers.
- For those who had revised their ambitions, the most common change was from a creative career to teaching. There were also indications that changing goals may mean graduates take longer to achieve their ambitions.
- Almost four out of five (79 per cent) of all graduates had achieved their chosen career, or were very or fairly close to it. Similarly, more than two-thirds of those in work felt that this work was in their chosen career.
- One in five graduates (20 per cent) felt they had some way to go to achieve their career goals and this proportion closely relates to graduates in work who felt they were under-employed. Older graduates, those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, and those who did less well in their degree studies were the least likely to have realised their ambitions.
- In terms of career values and motivators, work/life balance, development needs and income had the greatest impact on graduates' career decisions, and for the future, it is interesting to note that more than half of graduates expected to have caring responsibilities.
- The most important motivating factors were to make full use of skills and knowledge, to go on learning and to continue with creative practice. Graduates were also motivated by a need to have a stable and regular source of income (rather than a good income) and to contribute to society in some way.
- There was some indication that graduates may be trading off higher earnings in their career choices to achieve more satisfaction in other aspects of their work and living situation.
- A quarter of those who had not yet reached their chosen career (14 per cent of all respondents) felt they were unlikely to do so and identified barriers to career progression. In the main, financial factors were preventing individuals from moving forward – to take up relatively risky but rewarding jobs, gain experience in low or unpaid roles, or follow somewhat costly postgraduate study.
- Barriers were often inter-related: perceived lack of opportunities coupled with too much competition, difficulties breaking into an area, and a lack of connections, relevant skills or experience.
- For the future, many graduates anticipated at least some change over the next phase of their career, with four out of five indicating preferences for further training or learning and some degree of upward progression. Two-thirds thought they would be doing the

same as present, which corresponds to the high proportion of individuals who were in or very close to their career and to a similar proportion who were generally satisfied in their work.

- Two-thirds anticipated portfolio working, and self-employment is an important aspiration with a similar proportion (62 per cent) of graduates anticipating either running their own business or working freelance.
- Twenty-eight per cent of graduates anticipated a complete change of direction or doing something completely different (21 per cent) and those still working towards realising their ambitions were optimistic they would achieve them in the next five years.

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## 10 Creative careers in the 21st century

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This chapter:

- reviews findings in the contexts of creative higher education and the creative and cultural sector
- compares the findings with *Destinations and Reflections* to indicate trends
- explores the implications of the findings for higher education, the creative and cultural industries and for emerging graduates.

*Creative Graduates Creative Futures* contributes to the longest continuous study of occupational choices and working patterns, and offers comparable data to the pioneering *Destinations and Reflections*. Ten years on, employment growth in the creative industries and the size of the sector means that graduates continue to contribute very substantially to the creative economy, and in doing so, they demonstrate approaches to establishing a career that workers in other sectors may benefit from adopting in a rapidly changing economic environment.

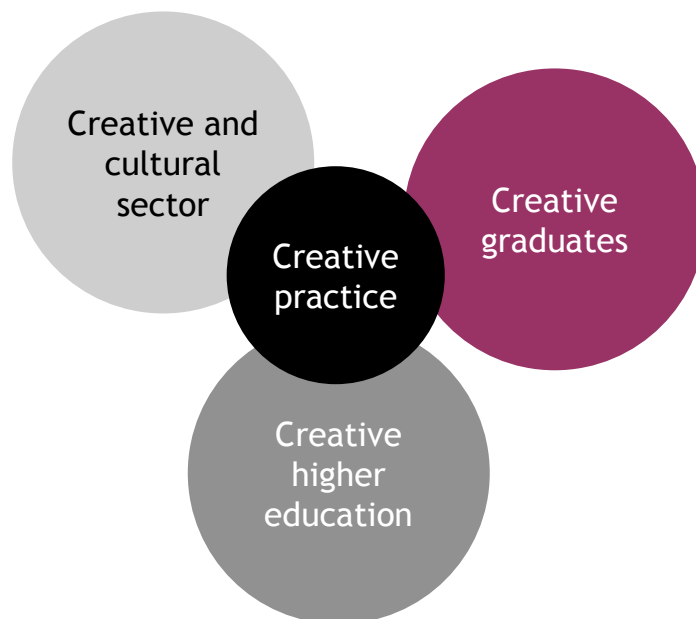
The survey findings tell us what is distinctive about creative graduates and their working lives. In essence, graduates from practice-based courses in art, design, craft and media subjects typically experience complex careers, prize creativity above other factors in the workplace, have a strong inclination to continue learning, and as a result experience considerable personal and work satisfaction at the expense of some disadvantage in terms of financial reward.

In this chapter we have focused on presenting broad and significant findings that will provide important measures of graduate success and inform priorities for the future relationship between higher education and the creative economy. The size of the survey, involving 3,500 graduates, has meant that analysis and interpretation of findings is complex and extensive, and there is considerable scope for more detailed investigation with the full dataset in relation to preferences and experiences of different groups by domicile, disability, family background or ethnicity and by subject discipline. More specific profiles are beyond the scope of this report and will contribute to further research papers.

## 10.1 Higher education and the creative industries

Widespread understanding of ‘*the essential relationship between education and the industries to which graduates progress*’<sup>25</sup> is central to the debate about how to sustain the creative economy. There is more complexity in the inter-action between graduates, creative industries and higher education, than in the simple equation of supply and demand for a growing and changing workforce in the creative sector (see Figure 10.1).

**Figure 10.1: The creative inter-relationship**



*Source: Creative Graduates Creative Futures, IES, 2010*

Old models for work, the purposes of education, skills agendas and graduate employment are limiting and prevent us from dealing with a new reality, where creative practice provides the context for academic study, work experience, employability, professional development, innovation, enterprise and productive careers. In this new reality, work satisfaction is focused on measures such as personal fulfilment and opportunities for creativity and new learning.

Graduates currently face high levels of unemployment and an erosion of traditional patterns for work in all sectors. The creative industries appear to be bearing up well in comparison with other economic sectors, but the expected knock-on effect of contraction in commercial creative work, for example in advertising and television, and in arts funding is forecast to make a very significant impact.

As graduates in this study are experiencing less stable working patterns, students emerging from creative courses will have to be resourceful and have access to practical forms of support appropriate for their needs, not just at the point of transition from their courses, but to sustain their development as their careers progress.

<sup>25</sup> See Foreword by Bartholomew.

## 10.2 Characteristics of creative graduates

Key findings in this study contribute to a profile of distinctive characteristics for creative graduates, in which they typically:

- learn important working methodologies and life skills through engagement with creative practice on their courses
- place a high value on their higher education experience but would like a stronger connection with the professional and commercial world on their courses
- engage in work and employment that is creative and closely related to their field of expertise or course of study
- undertake multiple part-time work activities combined with opportunities for development – portfolio careers
- are motivated by creativity, autonomy and independence in their work and opportunities to use and develop knowledge and skills
- seek to maintain a strong life/work balance, valuing spending time with family and friends
- aspire to a stable income, but are not willing to compromise values to achieve high earnings
- experience work on a self-employed basis at some point in their careers
- work in small organisations or micro-enterprises
- continue to develop creative practice, undertake further learning and develop new skills through formal and informal study
- are proactive and resourceful and willing to work unpaid to develop new knowledge, skills or opportunities and gain entry to creative work
- stay focused on their career goals and envisage continuing to progress in the same kind of work.

## 10.3 Key findings for creative careers

### The majority of graduates work in creative occupations

- A large majority of creative graduates find stable paid work, mainly in the creative industries and in their field of expertise. Looking across all of the graduates' experiences since graduating, almost three quarters (74 per cent) had had a paid permanent job, and a similar proportion (73 per cent) had worked in the creative industries.
- At the time of the survey, nine out of ten graduates (89 per cent) were undertaking work of some kind. Only half of these were working on a permanent contract.



- More than three quarters (78 per cent) of working graduates were in creative occupations at the time of the survey, a close match with those working in creative industries at 77 per cent.
- Graduates were able to describe up to three jobs or work activities at the time of the survey, to take account of portfolio working. The most common employment sector was the design industry, accounting for approximately one quarter of graduates and almost one fifth of jobs (18 per cent).
- Education (at 20 per cent of working graduates) was the next largest sector followed by fine art and fashion/textile design (both at 14 per cent) and work in media production and photography (13 per cent), largely reflecting the expected vocational choices of the sample population.

### A small proportion of graduates work in non-creative occupations

- Early assumptions made by those devising the study were that increasingly, art, crafts, design and media graduates would be engaged in work unrelated to their subject of study as creative courses expanded. However, at the time of the survey, fewer than one in five graduates (18 per cent) had a main job that they considered was not creative.
- Non-creative occupations were very diverse and spread over a wide range of economic sectors, mainly in retailing (4 per cent) and in not-for-profit sectors (3 per cent), with other sectors such as public service, health and social work accounting for fewer than two per cent of respondents in each.
- Even when listing all of their current work activities, only one quarter of graduates classified at least one of their roles as non-creative.
- Fewer than one in 20 graduates were unemployed or looking for work.

### Portfolio working is a major established working pattern

- The portfolio career represents a model for work that appears to be typical in the creative industries sector, and may be driven partly by personal preferences and partly by the way in which work in the industry is organised.
- Fifty two per cent of graduates were engaged in one main work activity at the time of the survey, tending to work full-time and on a permanent contract.
- Almost half (48 per cent) of graduates were engaged in multiple work activities or portfolio working at the time of the survey, typically combining paid employment with self-employment, working voluntarily, or developing their creative practice. The largest group: 30 per cent of graduates combined two work activities; 13 per cent had three and for a small proportion (five per cent) their work spanned at least four different types of work activity, often combined with formal learning.

- There was no statistical difference in the likelihood of portfolio working across the annual cohorts – indicating that this pattern does not change significantly over time – when graduates are four, five or six years into their careers. This was confirmed by the high levels of satisfaction with careers to date, the majority of graduates being settled on their career goals.
- Over half considered they had either achieved their chosen career or were very close to it with a further 28 per cent feeling they were fairly close. This is where they want to be and this is what they want to be doing.

### Working on a self-employed basis is a key feature of portfolio working

- Just under one half of all graduates had worked on a freelance basis (45 per cent) and around one quarter had started a business during their early careers. At the time of the survey, 23 per cent of respondents were self-employed or undertaking freelance work and 18 per cent were running a business.
- The majority of graduates in self-employed work were in creative occupations and in the creative industries (86 per cent for both). Sole trader status was a major feature of creative graduate activity, with 68 per cent of those self-employed working alone, and the remainder either working collaboratively or creating work for others.
- Where graduates reported self-employed activities as their main job, three fifths were working full-time, but when self-employment was recorded as their secondary/tertiary activity it was part-time. Freelancing was more common than running a business, but the balance shifted somewhat over the course of graduates' early careers.

### Part-time working is a key feature of creative careers

- At the time of the survey, 75 per cent of graduates were working full-time in their main work activity and 25 per cent part-time. However, the significance of part-time working is most apparent when looking across all work activities: 79 per cent of graduates in work at the time of the survey were working part-time in at least one of their work-related activities.

### Teaching is an important career destination

- One third (33 per cent) of respondents had experience of teaching (generally in the arts), particularly those further into their careers. At the time of the survey, one in five graduates worked as a teacher (18 per cent) at any level, from schools to higher education, with half of these combining teaching with other work or self-employment.
- One in ten graduates studied for a PGCE teaching qualification, but two out of five of these were not currently teaching and although it was valued as a professional qualification, it may be seen as insurance for the future. This warrants further investigation.
- When graduates changed their career goals, it was most frequently towards teaching.

### Unpaid and voluntary work contributes to career progression

- The post-graduation 'internship' and working unpaid is an established feature of the creative industries landscape, as a common strategy for finding work or gaining experience, with 42 per cent of respondents undertaking unpaid or voluntary work or work experience since graduating.
- At the time of the survey, one quarter (23 per cent) were still in these types of roles, although often as a secondary activity combined with permanent work and/or self-employment. On the whole, these tended to be creative roles and part-time.

### Creative graduates are lifelong learners

- Almost three-quarters of respondents (72 per cent) had undertaken some form of further study, education or training, independent study/more informal learning since graduating.
- Four in ten (39 per cent) were undertaking formal further study of some kind at the time of the survey, often supported with paid work. Graduates were keen to develop their skills and knowledge, enhance their job prospects and follow personal interests often related to their creative practice.
- One-third (33 per cent) of all graduates had undertaken a short course since graduating. Engagement in short courses in creative arts subjects was more common than in those focussed on business skills.
- More than half of graduates had continued to develop their creative practice in some way since graduation, often alongside other work activities.

### Creative graduates place a high value on postgraduate study

- More than one quarter of graduates returned to HE to study at a higher level, with 13 per cent of graduates having studied at masters level, and one in ten following a PGCE.
- Masters level study was not seen as a route to an academic career, with fewer than one per cent of study at doctorate level, indicating that academic research may not be identified by graduates as a serious career path and this was supported by the very small numbers identified as teaching in HE.
- Key motivations for postgraduate study were to enhance job opportunities, develop further knowledge and gain a professional qualification.

### Graduates rely on combined income streams and are not highly paid

- The widespread nature of unpaid work and internships in the creative industries may suppress the earning power of graduates and opens a debate about the true worth of graduates.

- Around half (48 per cent) of graduates reporting their working situation were earning over £20,000 (gross) at the time of the survey across all their jobs and working activities, and this included 14 per cent of graduates who earned at least £30,000.<sup>26</sup>
- There were concerns about low pay as one-third (33 per cent) of respondents were earning £15,000 or under, which is less than the average starting salary for a new graduate of any discipline. Pay tended to be lower in creative roles.
- Those in portfolio careers were financially disadvantaged compared with graduates with only one job: 48 per cent of those with at least three work-related activities earned less than £15,000 compared with 22 per cent of those with one job.

### Graduates gravitate towards London

- Over half (53 per cent) of all respondents (whether working or not) were living in the South of England at the time of the survey: a quarter (26 per cent) in London, 17 per cent in the wider South East, and 10 per cent in the South West of England. A further 12 per cent were in the Midlands or East Anglia, 14 per cent in the North of England, nine per cent were in Scotland or Wales, and 12 per cent were living overseas.
- Migration patterns indicate an overall drift towards London, as a much greater proportion of creative graduates now live in London than did so prior to commencing their undergraduate studies (26 per cent compared to 14 per cent).
- Focusing on those in work at the time of the survey, graduates living in London and those living overseas were the most likely to be working in a creative occupation across any of their jobs/activities (85 per cent and 83 per cent respectively). Those living in London were the most likely to be working in the creative industries.

### Graduates are satisfied in their working lives

- Graduates experienced high levels of career satisfaction: three quarters of working graduates (77 per cent) were satisfied with their work situation and four out of five (79 per cent) felt that their work related significantly to art, craft, design and media. Highest levels of overall satisfaction were found for graduates with higher earnings and among those whose work was congruent with their discipline or domain and who also felt that they could be creative in their work.

### Graduates aspire to creative careers and to achieve a good life/work balance

- Graduates overwhelmingly aspired to creative careers, their specific career goals aligning with their subject discipline and their career plans were most influenced by a strong desire for new learning.

<sup>26</sup> 62 per cent of workers in the creative industries earn below £20,000 with only 1 in 10 having earnings over £40,000 (Creative Choices, 2009).

- A high value was placed on opportunities to make full use of knowledge and skills, earn a stable income, pursue or maintain creative practice and have time with family and friends.
- Although four out of five graduates (79 per cent) were in or close to their chosen career, many anticipated at least some change over the next phase of their career, most commonly further training or learning and some degree of upward progression. Very few anticipated a complete change of direction.
- For the future, 44 per cent of graduates were interested in running their own business, and 18 per cent were doing so at the time of the survey. This was an important aspiration of these graduates.
- Graduates may be trading off higher earnings in their career choices to achieve more satisfaction in terms of life/work balance, personal development and independence.

#### Barriers to career progression are mostly financial

- Twenty per cent of graduates felt they had some way to go to reach their chosen career and 14 per cent felt they were unlikely to do so. A key barrier to career progression was lack of finance to enable individuals to undertake learning to benefit their practice and develop new knowledge, either through postgraduate study, moving to relatively risky but rewarding jobs, or by undertaking low or unpaid roles to gain experience.
- Other career inhibitors were perceived lack of opportunities, relevant skills or experience, coupled with competition and the difficulties encountered in gaining entry to new areas of work.

## 10.4 Key findings for a creative education

### Creative graduates value their creative education

- More than four out of five graduates had experienced participation in shows/exhibitions, peer and self-evaluation, teamwork, contextual studies and teaching by practitioners on their undergraduate courses. They rated most course activities as fairly or very useful, with Personal and Professional Development (PPD), teamwork and teaching by practitioners as the most useful in relation to their careers.
- Creative graduates felt that their creative education had developed the skills required for their careers, rating most highly creativity and innovation, visual skills and presentation skills, but had less well-developed IT, networking and client facing skills.
- Self-confidence and self-management were considered to be the most important to careers, yet they were felt to be less well-developed than core creative skills.
- Entrepreneurial skills were the least well developed and perceived to be the least important for career development.

- Just over half the graduates (52 per cent) felt their course had prepared them very or fairly well for the world of work. Respondents would have liked a better appreciation of what creative employment would be like, understanding client needs, training in IT and software and in business skills.

### Graduates are pro-active in gaining work experience

- Placements were seen as important for gaining insights into working practices and contacts in the industry and were experienced by 42 per cent of respondents. Just over half of these were doing so as a formal part of their course (57 per cent). Placements appeared to be associated with gaining creative work.
- Around one in five respondents (18 per cent) had organised their own placements. They tended to find these more useful than those arranged by courses. In an industry dominated by micro-businesses with limited capacity for taking on students, these opportunities are unlikely to increase.
- Informal work experience during vacations and term-time was widespread (64 per cent) but was perceived as less useful to career development.

### Graduates access support from HE after graduation

- Graduates expressed continuing career development needs, highlighting the importance of continuing progression and relationship between undergraduate learning, postgraduate study, on-the-job training and continuing professional development (CPD).
- Almost half of graduates had accessed job information and around one-third had taken up opportunities for professional development, networking and careers advice since graduating from higher education institutions. Where these opportunities were not taken, it was on balance because graduates were not aware of provision.
- Fewer than one in five had used studio facilities or accessed business start up advice from their institutions.

## 10.5 Comparisons with *Destinations and Reflections*

Ten years on, there are similarities and some marked contrasts when we compare findings in relation to graduates' career patterns and higher education experiences. *Destinations and Reflections* (D&R) pointed to six key features of art and design post-graduation activity:

*'Art and design graduates: tend to work in areas related to the discipline; tend not to be high earners; take time to establish a career; tend to work in small and medium enterprises; are heavily involved in self-employment; and have had little opportunity on their courses to develop some vital employability skills.'*

Blackwell and Harvey, 1999, p.127

These features resonate with the characteristics of creative graduates drawn from the present study and presented early on in this chapter.

### Career patterns since graduation

Patterns and preferences for career progression after graduation were broadly similar in both studies, except that a smaller proportion of CGCF respondents (32 per cent) had experienced unemployment since graduating (40 per cent D&R), more graduates had worked freelance (45 per cent from 38 per cent) and almost double the proportion of graduates had started a business (25 per cent from 13 per cent). Teaching was also more popular, with one third of graduates having taught since graduating, compared with 24 per cent in D&R.

### Working patterns at the time of the survey

There were similarities with D&R, and some marked differences. Taking the similarities first, almost half the graduates in both studies were involved in multiple activities (portfolio working) and combining permanent employment with self-employment. Unemployment rates (1 in 20) and the incidence of work unrelated to subject of study (1 in 5) remained unchanged.

In CGCF, a larger proportion of graduates worked in the creative industries sector, and in work that was closely relevant to art, design and media. This may have a bearing on satisfaction levels, as the majority of graduates were satisfied with their current work situation in sharp contrast to D&R in which considerably fewer graduates were in the creative sector and in which graduates were 'barely satisfied with their current work'.

There was some improvement in the level of earnings, in relation to thresholds for graduate starting salaries for the representative cohorts across the two studies.

The key indicators for changes in patterns of work were increases in part-time working, business start-up, self-employment and fixed-term or temporary work, together with a slight fall in full-time employment and a drift away from working in medium-sized enterprises to micro-businesses. This picture of a less stable work situation is consistent with recent growth in micro-enterprises, part-time working and self-employment in the creative and cultural sector:

#### Looking at graduates' main work activity at the time of the survey:

- Two-thirds of CGCF graduates (66 per cent) were working in the creative industries sector in their main job, compared with 36 per cent D&R.
- Fifteen per cent worked in the education sector (17 per cent D&R) and one in five CGCF graduates (19 per cent) were working in other sectors of the economy compared with almost half D&R respondents at 47 per cent.
- Four out of five CGCF graduates (79 per cent) felt that their work related significantly to art, craft, design and media (57 per cent D&R).
- Paid employment remained relatively stable, from 71 per cent D&R to 72 per cent.



- Full-time employment in main work activity has fallen from 81 per cent D&R to 75 per cent.
- Part-time working has increased from 18 per cent D&R to 25 per cent.
- Fixed-term contracts were more common at 20 per cent (14 per cent D&R) and similarly, temporary employment at 6 per cent (compared with fewer than two per cent D&R).
- Although the proportion of graduates running a business had doubled (from nine to 18 per cent), there was little change in the proportions working freelance/self-employed (23 per cent compared with 20 per cent D&R).
- There was a drift away from working in medium-sized enterprises, mainly to micro-businesses (26 per cent D&R to 47 per cent), with little change for those working in very large organisations (19 per cent D&R to 20 per cent).
- There are indications that earning levels had improved in real terms, with 66 per cent of CGCF graduates earning above an average graduate starting salary<sup>27</sup>, compared with 35 per cent D&R.

### Further study

Just under half of all respondents in both studies engaged in formal further study since graduating, and at the time of the survey 15 per cent of all respondents in both studies were undertaking a formal course of some kind.

The picture was similar when looking at postgraduate study only, with around half of all study since graduation being undertaken at this level, but by type of postgraduate qualification studied, there were increases in the proportions of courses at masters level (+ 13 percentage points) and for PGCE courses (+ six percentage points), compared with D&R. However, the breadth of further learning activity was reflected in the stronger interest in independent study and continued engagement with creative practice (27 per cent from 18 per cent D&R).

Part-time study combined with work continued to be the most common mode for further study, with two thirds of these studying part-time in D&R. At the time of the CGCF survey, 39 per cent of graduates were undertaking some kind of further study or independent learning often supported by paid work, and most commonly related to creative practice.

### The higher education experience

In both studies, continuity in the curriculum remains centred on developing creativity. This it does well, balancing the fostering of individual creativity, academic study and preparation for work, and was illustrated in CGCF by respondents rating creativity and

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<sup>27</sup> Note: Based on average graduate starting salary for representative cohorts in both studies.



innovation as the most highly significant. As in D&R, respondents valued the core academic and creative course components above other aspects of their courses.

Since D&R, the curriculum has developed further with the great majority of respondents experiencing activities that encourage employability skills and bring work-related learning into the curriculum, such as participation in exhibitions, peer evaluation, critical studies, teamwork and teaching by practitioners.

The widespread adoption of Personal and Professional Development (PPD) is the most notable curriculum response to employment preparation over the last decade (experienced by 74 per cent of all respondents) and most highly rated of all course activities. There were some improvements since D&R in opportunities for work placements, in spite of the growth in student numbers. Two fifths of CGCF respondents (42 per cent) had undertaken work placements of some kind compared with just under one-third in D&R (29 per cent).

Just over half of CGCF respondents who undertook placements had done so as a course requirement, (57 per cent compared with 42 per cent D&R). However, there are concerns about the supply of placements in the context of continued expansion in registrations for creative courses in Britain.

Graduates had well-developed work-place skills and the kinds of attributes sought by employers and considered them to be important. Overall, respondents appeared to be more satisfied with their skill development in the present survey, in contrast with D&R which found that teamwork and presentation skills, in particular, were lacking. These were rated highly in CGCF, an indication that improvements in the curriculum are taking place.

Yet, graduates were less satisfied with initiative/risk-taking and considered this less important than D&R graduates who rated it as one of the most important, implying that these aspects may feature less prominently in course philosophy and design, and they would have liked to learn more about how the industry works and the professional expectations of the commercial world.

## 10.6 Key issues and their implications

### Issues for creative graduates

Students are making choices when they enter higher education about a particular vocational direction. Our respondents show clear motivations for placing creativity and lifelong learning at the heart of their career values. Graduates are positive about their career progression and appear to be achieving their goals, mainly in creative work.

Greater proportions of creative graduates are working part-time, on temporary contracts or setting up in business, and show a strong inclination for further improvement to update knowledge and skills to remain competitive. The role of the contract worker is well-established and the traditional notion of a linear career progression is no longer a very useful concept. Clearly, graduates need to be resourceful and proactive in their early

careers to cope with instability in employment in the creative sector in which portfolio working provides a suitable model for generating work and income.

Portfolio working is not a phase of development, but a recognised and sought after pattern of working in the creative sector. This was confirmed by comparing cohorts and the degree of satisfaction graduates have expressed in their careers to date. We speculate that this pattern of working and learning is established in student life: in which full-time study is combined with relevant work experience, paid and unpaid, and income from part-time term-time and vacation work supports students through their studies.

Indeed, resourceful and adaptable creative graduates are the trail-blazers for coping with unstable employment conditions in this way, as we see graduates in all subjects coming into a more uncertain employment market.

Changes between D&R and CGCF suggest that graduates are now comparatively more resourceful and proactive. Strategies for gaining experience, updating knowledge, and coping with uncertainty have become well-established in graduates' career progression in an increasingly competitive world. These career characteristics are especially important and relevant in the current economic climate, and are the subject for further investigation in Stage 2 of CGCF.

However, there are areas of concern because creative graduates are disadvantaged in relation to working practices and earnings enjoyed by graduates from some other disciplines. The nature and form of voluntary work or unpaid 'internships' for all graduates post-graduation has become controversial in the context of minimum wage legislation and the extent to which graduates are giving free labour. At the same time, valuable experience and industry-related skills can be learned by working in this way

Unpaid work is also an important source of informal learning and appears to be more common in an increasingly competitive job market. There is a significant difference in the incidence of unpaid work for those whose parents had gone to university, indicating that graduates from more advantaged backgrounds have more chance of gaining relevant experience in this way because, presumably, their parents or family members can continue to support them.

### Issues for creative higher education

Graduates clearly valued their education. Creativity and innovation, visual skills and presenting work were considered to be well-developed. As discussed in Chapter 5, the pedagogy of art, design, crafts and media higher education embeds important employability skills within courses.

Active learning through project-based enquiry has always been a feature of the art and design curriculum in higher education. Through this approach students have been encouraged to develop both the capacity for independent learning and the ability to work with others. Students not only develop the ability to solve set problems in a creative way,

but they also develop the ability to identify and to redefine problems, and to raise and address appropriate issues.<sup>28</sup>

In the academic domain, creative practice provides the context for personal and professional development and our findings indicate that students continue to adopt this model after graduation in their portfolio careers – they continue to combine practice, further study and informal learning, and engage in paid and unpaid work. It follows, therefore, that it is essential for graduates to put their creative practice at the centre of any discussion that reviews their progression and needs, pre and post-graduation, in order to be able to articulate their strengths and position themselves in relation to future goals.

A distinctive characteristic of the creative curriculum is that opportunities for transfer of the creative process occur naturally, as students experience different contexts in which to apply their learning through live projects, exhibitions, commissions and learning alongside teacher-practitioners. Graduates take these important transferable skills into their working lives.

The high levels of career satisfaction experienced indicate that graduates' educational experiences are valuable, yet just under half the respondents did not feel well prepared for entry into their working lives. Presentation skills and team-working appeared to have greatly improved ratings since the D&R study, but graduates would have liked a greater engagement with professional aspects and industry standard working practices during their studies.

Formal placements and other work-related experience are unlikely to grow because creative industries are dominated by micro-businesses (87 per cent of creative businesses have fewer than 10 workers<sup>29</sup>), so industry capacity for providing paid or unpaid student work experience is severely limited.

Increasingly, courses rely on work-related learning activities in the curriculum such as industry linked projects and external exhibitions to provide simulation of professional practice. At the same time, students are taking greater responsibility for their career development to negotiate their own opportunities. The role of teacher-practitioners is key here, making connections for live projects, fostering innovation and providing links with industry contacts and employers. Research is under way to study the important relationship between student and teacher-practitioner in relation to industry awareness, innovation and employability<sup>30</sup>.

Gaining entry into creative work requires graduates to be resourceful and willing to work unpaid to gain this necessary experience. There is a need to explore differentiated models for employer engagement in the creative sector in which small business and freelance professionals work in fluid, collaborative and non-hierarchical models of practice.

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<sup>28</sup> QAA, *Subject benchmarking*, 2008, p.4.

<sup>29</sup> Creative and Cultural Industry Impact and Footprint, CCSkills 2009

<sup>30</sup> Looking Out, Art Design Media Subject Centre, in press.

*'A new paradigm for creative subjects in higher education is emerging that removes barriers between teaching, research, needs of industry and the employability of graduates. The boundaries between these areas become more permeable and there is a move towards integration and collaboration. This collaborative culture fosters the continuing professional development of students, academic staff, graduates, employees and employers in creative enterprises.'*

Ball, 2003

Many HEIs have well-established relationships with creative industries within their locality and internationally, and a wider role that involves consultancy, research-led innovation and prototyping, and facilitating the 'knowledge transfer' that underpins creative industry activity.

In this context, it is interesting that few of our respondents had entered teaching in HE or undertaken practice-led research at doctorate level. Further capacity building is required in research communities to nurture academic careers, meet aspirations for new knowledge and innovation in the HE sector and to bring in the next generation of teacher-practitioners. For the future, it will be important to establish and maintain the foundations for practice-led research at undergraduate level.

Short courses are clearly an accessible option both in terms of time and funding and there is potential for graduates to receive further support for their portfolio careers in this way, particularly in relation to enhancing their freelance work and creative ventures.

### Issues for creative industries

There is close alignment between the nature of creative enterprises, student experience in the academic domain and creative graduates' preferences. Portfolio careers, part-time working and self-employment are growing, and creative enterprises have distinctive characteristics that differentiate them from traditional business models:

*'(Creative practitioners) have an approach to developing a career as a portfolio of projects, contacts and skills that may become increasingly important in other sectors of the economy - a highly collaborative, creative and networked model of production. They prize their small scale as the basis for the intimate and creative character of their work - negotiating a space within the market economy where they can pursue their interests.'*

Leadbeater and Oakley, 1999

These characteristics resonate with those of creative students and graduates found in our study (above) and, as discussed in Chapter 4, it could be argued that the foundations for working methodologies and resourcefulness are nurtured in the distinctive pedagogy of creative practice-based learning.

Other research has made this connection. A study of more than 500 fine art graduates that examined the resourceful ways in which fine artists apply their artistic labour (Bakhshi et al, 2008) adds further weight to the suggestion that students learn important attitudes and values appropriate for the industry in which they will work. The study noted that fine artists have attitudes and skills conducive to innovation, in the ways in which they employ an 'interpretive' approach to engaging with projects with uncertain outcomes, enjoy risk-taking and learning new skills and processes, in a work context of multi-jobbing, collaboration and combining income streams.

For the future, creative businesses are likely to continue to be small in size, with limited capacity for recruiting large numbers of graduates. The predominance of a project-based contract structure will continue to need to draw on a pool of creative, skilled and adaptable workers. At the same time, these workers will be expected to be willing to acquire new learning to respond to specific niche needs of contracts and clients and continue to work flexibly. Many workers will be sole traders, so will not be employers, strictly speaking. They will mostly be individuals who combine or collaborate to respond to client needs, make new work or engage in creative endeavour.

## 10.7 Summary

Higher proportions of creative graduates are working in the creative industries than in the previous survey, 10 years ago. Survey findings demonstrate that creative graduates are well equipped to deal with the challenges of creative working, which they keep firmly in their sights as they navigate their way through the complexities of work underpinned by their desire to continue with their creative practice. Their tolerance of uncertainty and ability to adapt and continue to learn are required 21st century competencies.

Perhaps a key finding for this survey is that it contributes to a growing awakening within the creative sector that the experiences of creative workers, their resourcefulness and their determinants for successful and satisfying working lives, provide new career models that have a much wider significance in the world of work and society as a whole:

*'... perhaps the most incredible thing about the creative age is that it holds the possibility not only for economic growth and prosperity, but also for a much fuller development of human potential in general.'*

Florida, 2005, p.27

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