

Skillset consultation, 14-19 Creative and Media Diploma: Draft Statement of Content, Version 1

CHEAD response

CHEAD welcomes the opportunity to provide continued feedback on the above consultation paper.

General observations

As detailed in our response to April's consultation paper on 14-19 CMD Draft Structure and Indicative Content, CHEAD supports the focus on applied and experiential learning and appreciates the revised proposals in the Version 1 paper. However, CHEAD maintains certain reservations. In particular, while CHEAD agrees with the objectives set out in the Statement of Qualification Purpose, it must be ensured that the integrity is maintained through the Stage 2 Development:

CHEAD believes that the proposed CMD needs to retain its focus as a tool for progression to HE. Given that graduate recruitment in Creative Industries must be about progression to HE, whilst Work-related Learning (WRL) / Work-based Learning (WBL) is of fundamental importance to the vocational orientation of Diploma developments, the emphasis must not replicate the narrower specific job-slanted focus promulgated in apprenticeships.

Instead CHEAD asserts that the CMD should ensure a strong focus on creativity in both pedagogy and innovation. This includes the delivery and management of students' learning experiences, in that it requires that curricular design and delivery reflect 'ideas' based learning opportunities in the widest possible 'creative industries' options and opportunities. We must not allow narrow pathways and options to emerge at any level.

Content & Delivery

CHEAD is broadly in support of themes T1, T2, and T3, in that they allow further development through progression to HE. However, CHEAD is concerned that the theme T4 Creative Business & Enterprise appears too specific and narrowly 'business practice / skills' orientated, while it does not seem to maintain the necessary inter- / cross-disciplinary principles.

While CHEAD acknowledges the difficulty of defining Creative and Media sectors in a meaningful way, it is strongly concerned that a contradiction seems to exist between the overarching Statement of Qualification Purpose and applied learning against a background of defined disciplines. The Statement promises knowledge and skills that will be applicable in a range of contexts, while the defined disciplines by their nature are subject specific and specialist in context, skills and knowledge.

This point also has practical implications. CHEAD maintains its reservation raised in its previous consultation response that the range and degree of specialism required to deliver much of the proposed diploma in any / all of the subject areas may be very difficult for the providers to deliver. The level of engagement required from industry is extremely ambitious, and a more general definition of WRL / WBL may need to be adopted. Such an early departure into specialisms may be closing doors of opportunity, thereby reducing rather than enhancing the prospects of young learners. CHEAD would plead that that a more general approach is maintained.

As a consequence of the previous point, CHEAD would suggest that 'Gateway' partnerships should be led by specialist art and design providers / institutions that can evidence long-standing successful delivery of vocational provision and interface with the Creative Industries sector. Furthermore, Phase 2 developments must take cognisance of successful and effective existing curricula, i.e. First Diplomas, National Diplomas, and Foundation Studies Diploma.

Should you have any questions or comments regarding CHEAD and our views, please do not hesitate to contact Christoph Raatz, Executive Secretary, CHEAD, on 020 7387 2134, or email, c.raatz@thead.net.