

Skillset consultation, 14-19 Creative and Media Diploma: Draft Diploma Structure and Indicative Content

Consultation Feedback from CHEAD

The Council for Higher Education in Art & Design (CHEAD) is the association of 80 educational institutions with degree or postgraduate provision in art and design, represented by their most senior academic concerned with art and design.

CHEAD's primary concerns are to provide a forum for debate and exchange of information and ideas for senior managers and to seek to inform, influence, and initiate policy in higher education in art and design at national and other levels.

As set out in your consultation paper, CHEAD member institutions will provide the next destination for many of the future 14-19 CMD graduates. Our members therefore take a strong interest in achieving the best possible development and delivery of the diploma, and we welcome the opportunity to contribute to the consultation:

Questions relating to Section 1

1) Do you feel the proposed structure and content of the CMD will meet the aims and aspirations as set out in Section 1?

CHEAD welcomes the proposals in the consultation paper but there needs to be a clear understanding of the range of provision already existing so that this qualification does provide added value to learners.

CHEAD supports the focus on applied and experiential learning. However, it is concerned whether the introduction of the new diploma and its proposed structure offers the best framework for this.

CHEAD believes that it is difficult to define Creative and Media sectors as a single entity in a meaningful way. As a result, the shared aims appear to lack specific focus on the subject areas referenced.

It is crucial that the aims are consistent with Level 3 attainment equivalent to entry requirements to HE study. The proposed CMD therefore needs to be explicit about how it positions itself against existing diplomas and how it fits in the framework provided by the QCA Level descriptors, Diploma in Foundation Studies in Art & Design, QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, etc.

Questions relating to Section 2

2) What sector specific essential knowledge should be included in the principal learning?

While in favour of applied and experiential learning, CHEAD is concerned that such a strong emphasis on work placement at this point in students' education may be inappropriate and unrealistic. CHEAD strongly believes that in order to be effective in the creative industries, there must be opportunities for learners to engage with abstract concepts and complex ideas alongside skills development and work experience.

A thorough understanding of the complex inter-relationships within the media/design and creative sectors would be a useful underpinning for the diploma (i.e. areas of convergence,

difference and overlap alongside an understanding of contemporary developments and emerging technologies).

3) What sector specific essential skills should be included in the principal learning?

4) In addition to the Personal Learning and Thinking Skills, defined in the QCA Skills Framework and listed in section 2, what non-sector specific skills and behaviours should be included in the Diploma

5) Are there any skills and knowledge that are generic across the creative and media sectors, e.g. composition, critical analysis, consideration of environmental issues, consideration of ethical issues?

The consultation paper lists a set of skills and objectives that is very wide-ranging and general. CHEAD believes that sector specific essential skills should include

- drawing, research skills, critical and analytical judgements, the design process.
- Entrepreneurism, good communication, capacity to present intellectual curiosity

Because of the integrated nature of art and design these skills are embedded and should be taken as an response to questions 3, 4 and 5.

6) Is there anything that, in your view, would add value to the Diploma, e.g. the study of a science subject, business skills, additional Maths or English above the Functional Skills requirement?

Key to the success of the diploma will be an appropriate level of attainment in Maths, English and a foreign language if career options for diplomates are not to be constrained.

Questions relating to Section 4

7) Do you have any other comments in relation to any aspect of the proposed structure and content of the Creative and Media Diploma?

CHEAD considers that the scope of intended provision and the range of opportunities to be presented to learners is very ambitious. The structure is very dependent upon the availability of a range of contemporary knowledge and highly specialised skills across a diverse range of disciplines. Without major capital investment, it is difficult to envisage the concentration of such resource within current 14-19 institutional provision. The diploma will be much weakened if only a restricted sub-set of the principal learning can be covered.

The diploma could be further weakened in areas with only limited work-placement opportunities which may be extremely difficult to provide outside of major urban centres, particularly in those disciplines where SMEs are the most common configuration of the industry. Many employers are reluctant to commit to short or longer term work placement experiences. Schools may therefore have difficulty in managing the work placements and work simulation to adequate levels. Students from such schools and areas may therefore be seriously disadvantaged in some area.

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.