

Practice-Informed Learning

The Rise of the Dual Professional

GuildHE



Distinction and Diversity
in Higher Education



FOREWORD

Students enter higher education for a whole host of reasons: passion for their subject, the chance to enhance their prospects or simply to broaden their horizons, to name just three. Every student will be unique in their exact motivations, but at the heart of every single undergraduate's journey is one thing: the learning process.

Government has devised the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) to drive renewed focus on teaching and learning in higher education. However the TEF will only ever capture a part of a complex picture. The aim of this report is to add another perspective to that picture, by exploring the value of practice-informed learning. Drawing on the experiences of GuildHE member institutions, this report highlights the positive impacts that practice-informed learning models can have for students, by making their work more engaging, challenging them to think in new ways, grounding theoretical understanding in 'real-world' contexts, and providing skills and networks that will improve their employment prospects.

Nor are the benefits limited to the students. A common feature of many case studies is the involvement of staff who are both professionals in their industry and also involved directly in teaching and learning, giving rise to the notion of the 'dual professional' or 'practitioner-teacher'. Practitioner-teachers can become part of new communities and gain new perspectives on their work. Businesses benefit from a graduate talent pool that has a better grasp of how industry really works, and these benefits can also be shared more widely, through combining practice-informed learning with social action and "active citizenship".

This is not to say that practice-informed learning models are without challenges, from simple matters of timetabling, supporting practitioners to develop their pedagogical approaches and ensuring that new models of delivery are sustainable over the longer term, to more abstract issues, such as building and maintaining a cohesive academic community. This report addresses these hard truths head on, to ensure that practice-informed learning can be delivered in a way that is sustainable for students, staff, institutions and external partners alike.

GuildHE believes that the strength of the UK higher education system lies in its diversity. To ensure that every student can succeed, we must provide a rich tapestry of different educational models. As this report demonstrates, practice-informed learning is a key thread in this tapestry.

GuildHE would like to thank all those who have helped to deliver this project; every institution that submitted case studies to the report, the Universities and Colleges Employers' Association (UCEA), for guidance on staff contracts, and colleagues at the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) and Advance HE for comments on early drafts. Finally, thanks must go to Alex Bols, GuildHE Deputy CEO, for overseeing the project, and to Jack Fleming, GuildHE Project Officer, for his hard work in bringing together this report.

**Professor Joy Carter,
Vice Chancellor,
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EXECUTIVE

SUMMARY

This report draws together 19 case studies from 17 GuildHE member institutions, to explore the key benefits and challenges of delivering practice-informed learning in higher education.

We begin by outlining the policy context in which this report should be placed. We consider current government priorities that shape understandings of “good teaching”, and how these priorities stand in tension with students’ views of the value of teaching and learning, rooted in industrial or professional experience. We then offer a definition of practice-informed learning and what it means to be a “practitioner-teacher” or “dual professional”.

Subsequent chapters take a thematic approach, outlining a particular set of benefits or challenges, and posing questions for readers to consider, before providing a number of illustrative case studies. The questions to consider are also brought together at the end of the publication.

“The Benefits for Students” explores how students can stand to gain from the use of practice-informed learning models. This may be by developing a deeper understanding of their subject, building professional relationships that may support them in work, or enhancing transferable skills that can be of value throughout students’ academic and professional lives.

“Enhancing Professional Practice” considers how practice-informed learning can benefit the professionals involved directly in the learning process. Involvement in practice-informed learning can provide inspiration, access to professional networks and development opportunities, as well as challenging practitioners to look afresh at their activity beyond teaching.

“The Benefits to Employers” details the impact that supporting and facilitating practice-informed learning can have for the businesses involved. They may benefit directly through the contributions of students to their business, and once again when the same students become graduates and have direct experience of the business and its needs. Employers may also find that engaging with practice-informed learning provides a pathway to wider engagement with institutions, on a range of other collaborative projects.

Much like “The Benefits to Employers”, “Wider Social and Economic Benefits” considers those instances where practice-informed learning extends beyond the staff and students involved, to enrich communities and the economy as a whole.

Finally, we address “The Challenges of Practice-Informed Learning”, from ensuring that staff form a cohesive community and sustaining partnerships over the longer term, to providing opportunities for practitioner-teachers to develop both their academic and professional careers.

POLICY

CONTEXT



Our strategic aims in these spheres are:

STUDENTS:

Promote excellent student engagement, experience and outcomes as the heart of a quality UK HE sector.

GuildHE Strategy to 2020

This report sets out the benefits and challenges of using practice-informed learning in the context of higher education.

Since 2012, the proportion of students reporting that their course represents 'good' or 'very good' value for money has fallen by 15%.¹ Yet teaching quality was the most common reason for students to report 'good' or 'very good' value for money, suggesting that a renewed focus on high quality teaching could halt this decline.² Of course, different students will have different priorities, so it is right that the higher education sector focuses on both improving the teaching offered to students, and ensuring that students are better informed about what they can expect from their course in advance.

Success as a Knowledge Economy, the Government's 2016 higher education white paper, laid out initial plans for enhancing teaching and learning in the sector. The white paper noted that "clear priorities of students while at university included: 'having more hours of teaching', 'reducing the size of teaching groups' and 'better training for lecturers'".³ These priorities – drawn from the 2015 HEPI/HEA *Student Academic Experience Survey* – were to be addressed through what is now called the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF), which would both inform students, and drive improvements at institutional level.⁴

Since its inception, GuildHE has been broadly supportive of the policy ambition of the TEF. However, there is a risk that the TEF incentivises institutions to focus on certain aspects of their engagement with students, while devaluing other areas.

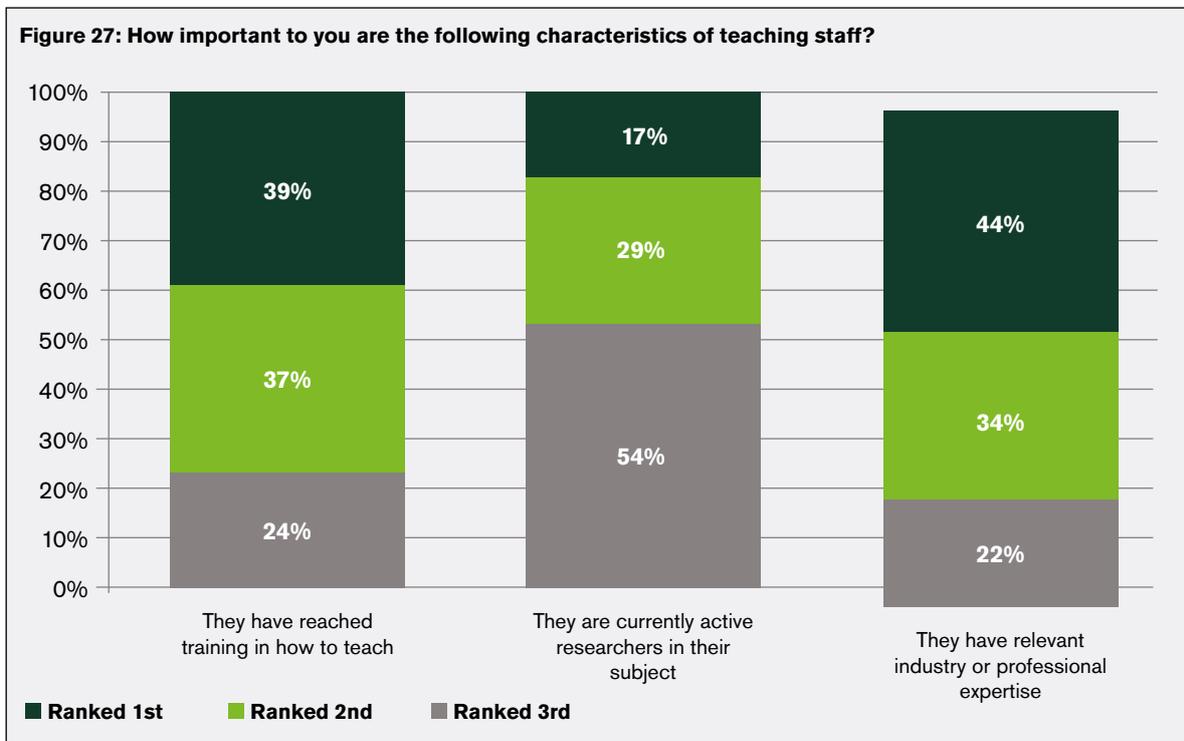
1. J. Neves, & N. Hillman, *2018 Student Academic Experience Survey* (York: AdvanceHE/Higher Education Policy Institute, 2018), p.11.
2. J. Neves, & N. Hillman, *2018 Student Academic Experience Survey*, p.15.
3. HM Government, *Success as a Knowledge Economy: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility & Student Choice* (London: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2016), p.44
4. HM Government *Success as a Knowledge Economy*, p.43.



Between 2015 and 2017, the *Student Academic Experience Survey* explored how students valued different qualities in their teachers, consistently finding a positive attitude among students to teachers with relevant industry or professional experience. For example, in 2017, Professional expertise was rated as important by some 85% of respondents.⁵ The pattern was almost identical in 2016 (though it was reported slightly differently).⁶

Most significantly, the 2015 *Student Academic Experience Survey* – the first to include a question on the characteristics of teaching staff (repeatedly cited by the white paper) – found that relevant industry or professional expertise was ranked as the most important characteristic by 44% of respondents, compared to 39% who prioritised training in how to teach. Indeed, given the national emphasis on “research-informed” teaching, it is interesting to note that only 17% of students rated research activity as their priority, compared to 44% that chose relevant professional or industry expertise.⁷

Figure 1: How important to you are the following characteristics of teaching staff?



Base: All respondents (15,129).

Teaching characteristics - HEPI/HEA 2015 Student Academic Experience Survey

5. J. Neves & N. Hillman, *2017 Student Academic Experience Survey* (York: Higher Education Academy/Higher Education Policy Institute, 2017), p.44.
 6. J. Neves & N. Hillman *2016 Student Academic Experience Survey* (York: Higher Education Academy/Higher Education Policy Institute, 2016), p.29.
 7. A. Buckley, I. Soilemetzidis, & N. Hillman, *2015 Student Academic Experience Survey* (York: Higher Education Academy/Higher Education Policy Institute, 2015), p.30.

This emphasis on industry and professional experience was particularly pronounced among students of subjects that are traditionally more vocational. More than 50% of students on courses in business and administrative studies, education, subjects allied to medicine, architecture, planning and building, and creative arts and design ranked industry or professional experience as their top priority; in no discipline was research activity the most common top priority.

Likewise, students from institutions closely aligned to industry or professional practice, such as those which are members of GuildHE and UKADIA, were more likely to value industry and professional experience than, for example, students at Russell Group institutions. These findings are corroborated by the QAA, which has commented on the excellent teaching quality found in specialist institutions, as well as strengths in employer collaboration and student engagement.⁸

The risk is that the TEF ignores these variations in students' preferences because of government priorities. *Success as a Knowledge Economy* identified better training for lecturers as a student priority, yet ignored students' positive views on staff with relevant industry experience.⁹

This focus might lead to a metric simply measuring the proportion of staff with teaching qualifications rather than actually considering teaching quality or recognising other valuable elements to good teaching, such as being either research-active or active in their industry. The TEF tends to count what is easily measured rather than measuring what really counts.

This is particularly troubling given that practice-informed learning is likely to enhance the 'soft skills' that businesses want, improving student outcomes. The Government's Industrial Strategy identifies ensuring people with the right skills, particularly high-level technical skills, as a key challenge to the future success of UK industry.¹⁰ The strategy recognises the value of higher education/employer engagement: it supports the development of institutes of technology and employer-led national colleges.¹¹ It also commits to investing in technical education, including by integrating a 'high-quality work placement' into every new T-level qualification, supporting apprenticeships. In this context, it would seem perverse if the TEF were not to reward those institutions which pursue closer links with industry.

8. QAA, *Specialist Institutions in Review: Leaders in their Engagement with Work and Professional Practice* (Gloucester: The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2017), pp.4-5.

9. HM Government, *Success as a Knowledge Economy*, p.44.

10. HM Government, *Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future* (London: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2017), p.94.

11. HM Government, *Industrial Strategy*, pp. 100, 103.

PRACTICE-INFORMED LEARNING – A DEFINITION

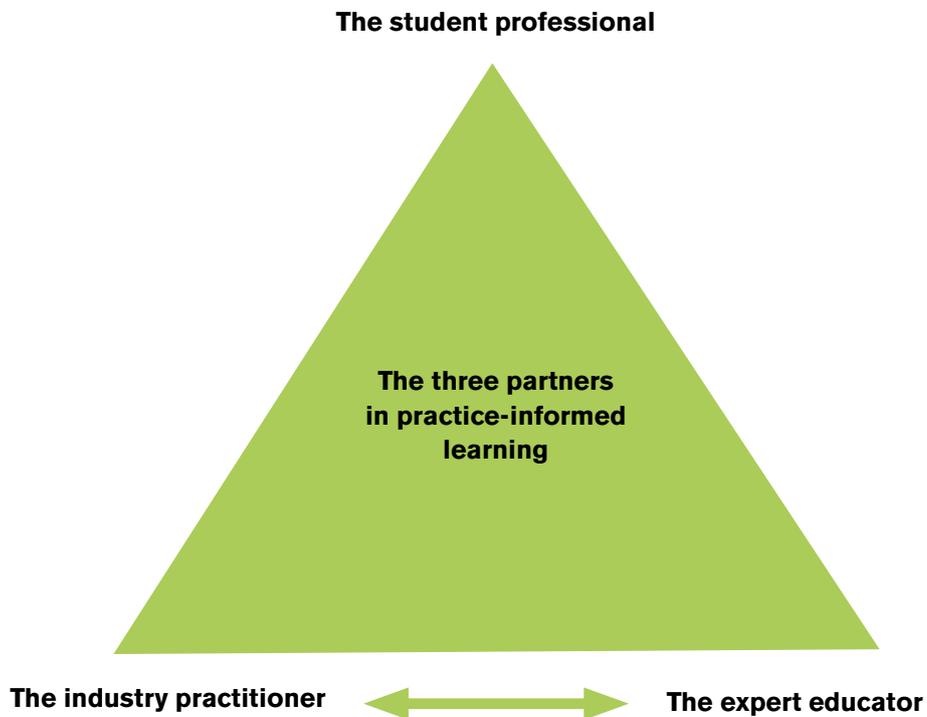
Between 2008 and 2010, the HEA's Art, Design, Media Subject Centre (ADM-HEA), undertook substantial research on the engagement between Higher Education and creative and cultural enterprise, including exploring the role of teacher-practitioners. ADM-HEA's 10by10 project at Bath Spa University, found that "There is a lack of clarity in describing 'practice-knowledge' or a practitioner approach to teaching".¹²

This report takes a broad view of practice-informed learning; encompassing any situations where expertise from industry is brought into the classroom to inform teaching practice, or where more hands-on learning is taken out into professional settings. This can encompass everything from working with 'live briefs' to partnerships with specific industry organisations.

There are three key partners in this model of learning: the student professional, the industry practitioner and the expert educator.

¹². D. Clews, *Stepping Out: Studies on Creative and Cultural Sector Engagement with Arts HE* (Brighton: University of Brighton, 2010), p.6.

Figure 2: The three partners in practice-informed learning



A particular focus of this report is those situations where the roles of industry practitioner and expert educator are elided, through the involvement of a single “dual professional” or “practitioner-teacher” with both industry and teaching expertise. Professional practice can inform teaching, while teaching can enrich professional practice.

It should, however, also be recognised that the extent to which practice-informed learning can

be integrated into the curriculum will depend on the subject discipline. Some subjects, such as medicine and the creative arts, have a long history of practice-based learning. This report aims to highlight the role such learning can play in both these well-established contexts, as well as in other disciplines, which might have traditionally relied on lectures, seminars and other forms of classroom-based learning.

1. THE BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS



It is unlikely that many students enter HE without any focus on their future employment/career outcomes.

Jane Kettle, *Flexible Pedagogies* (2013)

Practice-informed learning, like any other model, exists first and foremost to benefit students. Its positive impacts are wide ranging, encompassing improved student engagement, better outcomes and greater 'work-readiness', through the development of industry awareness, soft skills and networks. Practice-informed learning can even be targeted at specific groups to address systematic disadvantages.

The HEA *UK Engagement Survey 2017* shows that the percentage of students that believe they are developing career skills is currently 49%.¹³ This suggests that there is still work to do to give students these skills, and to enable them to recognise the skills that they are getting. Developing the right skills for the future economy is also a focus of the Government's Industrial Strategy.

Practice-informed learning has the potential to address these challenges, bringing current industrial expertise into the academy. This gives students an up-to-date understanding of their chosen field, whether that be agricultural engineering or animation, better preparing them for work.

By engaging with expert practitioners, students are also afforded opportunities to begin to develop professional networks. In an increasingly competitive graduate employment market, such networks can be invaluable, particularly to first-generation students and those with low social capital.

If the learning takes a more practical form, through 'live briefs' or placements, students can learn cutting-edge skills by applying them to real-world problems. This is likely to give students a better understanding of the practicalities and limitations of the technical skills they have developed, and will enhance soft skills, such as teamwork and decision making, providing an appealing record to potential employers.

Even when students do not have specific employment goals, the experience and skills they can gain through practice-informed learning can give them work-like experience and transferable skills, highly valued across all sectors.¹⁴ Better engagement in learning is also strongly correlated with better outcomes.¹⁵ Our case studies suggest that practice-informed learning can be more accessible and stimulating to students than traditional classroom learning, giving students a greater sense of ownership. It is clear that practice-informed learning can play a big role in improving student subject, career and personal development, which must ultimately be the goal of education.

Questions to consider:

- How can practice-informed learning models be integrated into different courses?
- How are students supported to reflect on their skill development and work-focused experiences?
- How are student reflections and feedback used to further enhance teaching and learning?
- Is feedback from staff, practitioners and other partners captured alongside student reflections?

13. J. Neves, *The UK Engagement Survey 2017: Student participation and skills gain* (York: Higher Education Academy, 2017), p.13.

14. University Alliance, *Technical and professional excellence: Perspectives on learning and teaching* (London: University Alliance, 2017), p.10.

15. G. Gibbs, *Dimensions of Quality* (York: Higher Education Academy, 2010), p.33.

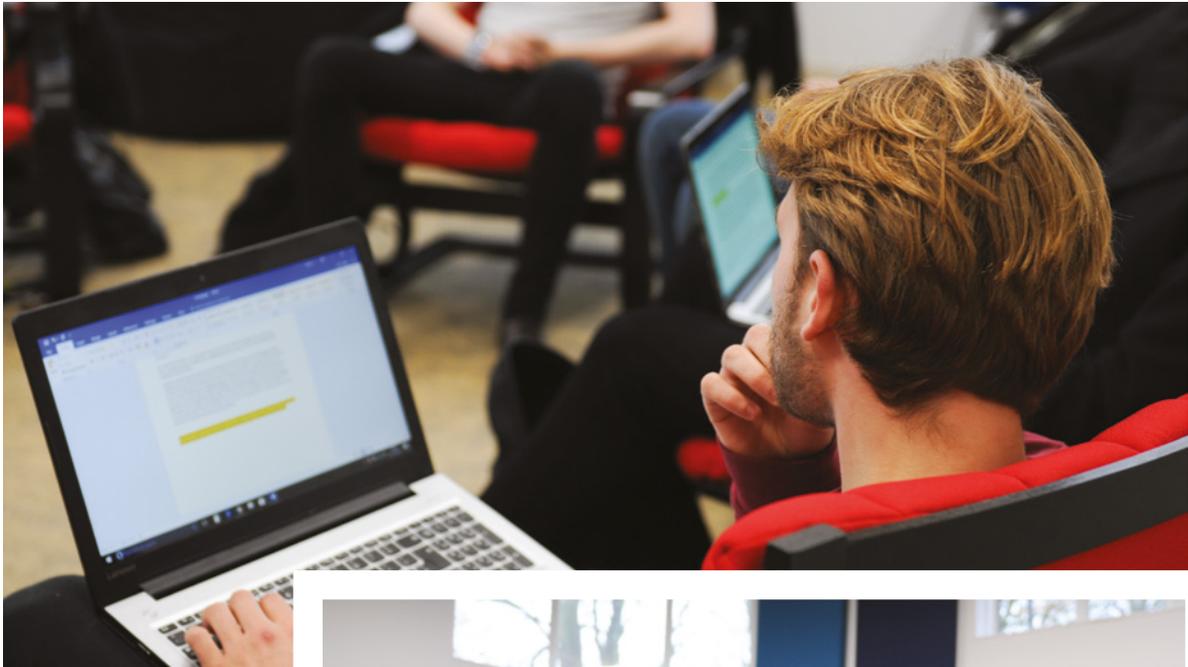
CASE STUDY 01:

**BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY:
THE 'TEAM-COACH' AS AN EXPERT**



I have learned more in the first six months of this course than I have since Year 9 at school.

Jack, First Year BA (Hons) Business (Team Entrepreneurship) student



Background

Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU), tries to encourage practitioner-led learning, rather than teaching, with a focus on what the students do. For example, on the Team Entrepreneurship degree course, BGU teaches very little in order that the students might learn a lot.

Implementation

BGU has adopted a new model of learning environment for the Team Entrepreneurship degree where the “team coach is an expert”, replacing the standard model of the “teacher as the expert”. As such, the two ‘team coaches’ – Chris Jackson and Karen Lowthrop – have enjoyed successful business careers in the SME sector as owner/ managers and directors.

BGU has found that it can be difficult for students who are used to a pedagogical model of teaching to suddenly adapt to a regime where they are no longer spoon-fed information, but encouraged to explore and challenge accepted knowledge based on their own experiences of ‘doing’ business. To encourage a realistic transition, practitioner-coaches can also act as subject-specific mentors, supporting students with an empathetic approach.

One of the issues with this model appears to be that practitioner-teachers are not always considered as ‘equals’ by their academic colleagues, although they are both there to perform the crucial and demanding task of providing an education that allows students

to reach their academic potential. This may be because there is an assumed lack of academic prowess in the practitioner, or because the subject-specific competency that they bring is manual rather than cerebral. Either way, what they enable is a valuable synthesis, which is essential for students’ learning to become explicit.

Results

The practitioner-coaches at BGU have both completed extensive ‘team mastery’ coaching – sector training in the UK and Europe in the Finnish Team Academy methodology – and are currently working towards HEA Fellowship. This expertise and training means they are prepared to facilitate practitioner-led learning. It is also hoped that HEA Fellowship will provide the coaches with the academic credibility that their work merits.

BGU believes this model of practitioner-coaching creates opportunities to develop attributes and capabilities that need to be learned rather than assumed, and that students value their BGU education all the more for this. The approach ensures that BGU students graduate ready to enter the world of work, instead of showing up with “all the gear and no ideas”.

More information

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It has always intrigued me that ‘business’ should be taught as theory. “Doing” business is not theoretical: to be effective at business is like learning a martial art - you can be shown basic moves, but for them to be of any value the student must be able to adapt them to suit whatever situation they find themselves in.

Chris Jackson – Senior Lecturer and Team Coach



CASE STUDY 02:

HARPER ADAMS UNIVERSITY: BRINGING INDUSTRY INNOVATIONS INTO THE CLASSROOM



Industry-based activities are useful as they allow us to get in-touch with very current information/data that we can utilise in our careers.

Hannah, Undergraduate Student



Background

Harper Adams University, based in rural Shropshire, is an institution that specialises in disciplines spanning land-based industries, from agriculture to food supply chains. By working closely with many of the key sectors within the land-based economy, Harper Adams University has built and developed industry links that serve not only to provide graduate employment opportunities, but importantly to allow the courses and modules to develop in an industry-aligned manner.

This is not a recent development; employability is one of Harper Adams University's key traditional values. However, changing demographics and uncertain agri-politics means that students are looking for, and increasingly expecting, more depth, breadth and variety from their investment in the university. The challenge is that this needs to be delivered in a way that does not jeopardise the hugely successful employment results seen over recent years.

Implementation

One of the ways of delivering this is to turn to our industry contacts, colleagues and contemporaries to ensure that we maintain 'relevance' both to them as future employers, and the student body, who can appreciate that their studies are not built and delivered in isolation but very much aligned to real-world, current, practical scenarios.

Teaching staff with industry backgrounds have, at Harper Adams University, been able to successfully use their experience to build a network of contacts that have added to the student experience in a number of ways: visiting speakers, informal Q&A sessions, site visits and practical demonstrations have all featured in modules driven by teaching staff with 'real-world' experience, who are acutely aware of the benefits to their students.

Recently colleagues have also started to create virtual field trips to inject further real-world experience for the students. Taking full advantage of Harper Adams Soil Hall (a vast indoor field), Simon Allen, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Crop and Environment Sciences, runs a session where specialist machinery manufacturers demonstrate state-of-the-art developments in cultivation techniques. This is hugely beneficial from both sides, with the specialists able to quiz the students on their views of the developments, and the students wholeheartedly engaging with the concept of someone being genuinely interested in their point of view.

Outcomes

Clear, unequivocal student feedback, from traditional routes such as end-of-year module reviews and informal one-to-one discussions, show that this approach is highly valued and appreciated at all levels in the university, but particularly, and not surprisingly, by final-year students. This has been reinforced by a recent student-led request to expand the Student Excellence Awards to include an industry category; clear evidence that our industry-led approach not only works, but chimes with an increasingly savvy and wired cohort who demonstrably appreciate the extra mile when it is delivered.

If employability is the foundation for future growth, then at Harper Adams University, staff with industry links and networks are the cornerstone.

More information

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CASE STUDY 03:

HEREFORD COLLEGE OF ARTS: MAKING CONNECTIONS



Background

Illustrators can lead lonely lives. Most are freelance, individually working to commissions rather than collaborating as part of a group. Some juggle a portfolio career. However, they frequently belong to far more extensive international networks and external communities of practice, which include editors, academics, writers, poets, organisations and designers. Hereford College of Arts has found that working with such practitioners brings enormous benefits to the institution's students.

Implementation

In March 2018, Hereford College of Arts BA (Hons) Illustration and Illustration/Animation students, largely from rural backgrounds, travelled to Portugal and met contemporary Portuguese illustrator Joao Fazenda, and Ed Hooks, author of international best-selling textbook *Acting for Animators*. One was a network contact from new lecturer and illustrator Nicholas Stevenson, the other a contact of the course leader Neil Hadfield. Joao and Ed spoke to students not only about their work in the industry, but also the importance

of place in the global economy, giving students the chance to consider Portugal as a future place to relocate.

In the last year, students on the Illustration and Illustration/Animation course have had 11 masterclasses from active practitioners (not including their visit to Lisbon). Students have strong links with young professional networks such as 'Inkygoodness' and 'Glug'. They work on an international level with annual live projects set by Hay Festival. The course leader is currently working with narrative painter Clive Hicks-Jenkins to organise a day retreat for students and staff with speakers from the Folio Society and House of Illustration, among others.

Results

The aim of all this is to enrich students' experience and to ensure that they leave with the ability to create exciting work that will be in demand, and with access to a network that will support their future connections. For example, one recent graduate has secured two book illustration commissions from publishers he met through this professional network.

Additionally, although many of the external connections Hereford College of Arts has are solely practising illustrators, key academic staff continue to be active as illustrators alongside their teaching commitments. Picking up fractional teaching hours can often support professional careers. There is symbiosis in teaching and learning – passing on skills and discussing work with students within a creative educational community can also energise a lecturer's practice.

For the institution, this network of educator/practitioners supports students in not only bringing professional practice to an institution, but also in encouraging dialogue about teaching and learning through an extended form of peer review that crosses institutional boundaries.

Without lecturers and course leaders who work as both educators and professional illustrators/animators, students would lose access to such networks. The demands of maintaining an active career as a creative professional in the global economy require that the staff and students collaborate, communicate and keep up to date with trends. The networks of practice that begin with lecturer/practitioners extend to include students, graduates, commissioning editors, galleries, writers and practitioners at the height of their careers in a conversation that supports everyone's creative trajectories.

More Information

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CASE STUDY 04:

RAVENSBOURNE UNIVERSITY LONDON: TARGETTED SUPPORT FOR DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS



It often feels like you hear about industry, but you don't really know how to get into it. SEEDS allowed me to have that access.

BA (Hons) Animation graduate and 2014 SEEDS programme participant

Background

Certain groups of students face particular challenges if they are to succeed in higher education. As an industry-focused higher education institution specialising in design and digital media, Ravensbourne University London has a long-running commitment to providing students with opportunities to work with industry. Disadvantaged students can particularly benefit from practitioner-led mentoring, such as that provided by Ravensbourne's Self-Employment Entrepreneurship Diversity Scheme (SEEDS).

Implementation

Running across six months, the SEEDS programme provides students and graduates who are dyslexic, dyspraxic or neuro-diverse with industry mentoring, workshops and life-coaching sessions, to help them become entrepreneurs.

The neuro-diversity focus of the project directly addresses the lower employment outcomes for these graduates, and builds on research by

Professor Julie Logan into the entrepreneurial traits and business success of dyslexics. The report *Creative Graduates Creative Futures* suggests dyslexic students are more likely than other students to freelance or set up a business, and are twice as likely as neuro-typical students to seek business support advice.¹⁶ Often, they also feel less prepared for the workplace when they graduate than other students.

Within this, Ravensbourne's BME community has been prioritised to address the employment outcomes of BME students. Research suggests that black, Asian and minority ethnic graduates are two-and-a-half times more likely to be unemployed than white degree-holders.

Previous mentors have included Gareth Unwin, Producer of *The King's Speech* and Head of Film at Creative Skillset (a former Ravensbourne student); Beth Parker, Animation Production Manager, Disney EMEA and Caleb Wood, Technical Lead for Hogarth & Ogilvy.

16. L. Ball, E. Pollard & N. Stanley, *Creative Graduates Creative Futures* (Brighton: Institute for Employment Studies, 2010).



Outcomes

As the first such scheme in the UK higher education sector, SEEDS was awarded second place in the prestigious Guardian Entrepreneurship in Higher Education Awards.

Being mentored by industry experts is of significant benefit to students, allowing them to learn from individuals who have been through similar processes, in a manner which best suits their learning needs. Similarly, it gives industry mentors the opportunity to learn about student businesses, and meet recent or soon-to-be creative industry graduates.

Previous participants in the SEEDS scheme have gone on to develop apps connecting media professionals, shoot pilots and pitch them to the BBC, and develop a variety of business ideas, including a business plan for a 2D animation company. One student is now running her own fashion business through Ravensbourne's incubation unit, while another was able to crowdfund and produce a documentary about cerebral palsy. The previous year saw students go on to fill business development roles and launch careers as successful freelancers in a range of industries.

More Information

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If anyone in the industry is considering being part of this, I would urge you to go for it. Ravensbourne handled the relationship brilliantly from start to finish. Every phone call or email sent demonstrated just how much they 'get' industry and the way we work.

**Terry, Post Production
Mentor with SEEDS**



2. ENHANCING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE



93% of teachers in creative arts work or sustain effective links with creative and cultural industries. 72% have more than 10 years' experience in those industries.

D. Clews & S. Mallinder, *Looking Out: Key Report* (2010)

Practitioners, especially those which we identify as “dual professionals” can gain a great deal through engagement with teaching activities.

Many practitioners, particularly freelancers, take up teaching roles in order to provide a steady, reliable income stream.¹⁷ However, as these case studies show, teaching roles can provide dual professionals with far more than just a more stable bank balance. Working with students can give practitioner-teachers different perspectives on their work, challenging them to explore new avenues and reconsider accepted methodologies with fresh insights.

Dual professionalism seems to be a particularly common feature of the creative arts education sector. There are several reasons for this. As will be explored later in this report, practitioner-teachers often need to be flexible in their working patterns, something which may be easier for self-employed creative practitioners, who often hold a wide portfolio of roles. Furthermore, creative practitioners, who often work in relative isolation, appear to value the networks and community that being involved in teaching provides.

The benefits of dual professionalism are not, however, limited to creative practitioners. As the case study from Hartpury University demonstrates, dual professionalism can be of value in a whole host of different settings, allowing individuals to gain new perspectives on their work and collaborate with new partners.



Questions to consider:

- How can dual professionals in your institution be supported to reflect on the benefits of teaching to their industry or professional practice?
- Do academic career progression routes recognise professional expertise in the criteria for promotion?
- Are industry practitioners supported to enhance their teaching skills, for example through CPD or mentoring?
- What scope is there for dual professionals to take teaching sabbaticals to focus on developing their professional practice?

17. E. Easton & E. Caldwell-French, *Creative Freelancers* (London: Creative Industries Federation, 2017), p.18.





CASE STUDY 05:

NORWICH UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS: ENRICHING PRACTICE THROUGH TEACHING



A learning environment that is enriched by collaborative working, with staff who are professional practitioners in their own right...

TEF 2017 Panel Statement

Background

As a specialist arts university, Norwich University of the Arts (NUA) believes it is important for teaching staff to be current practitioners in their own disciplines. This allows them to better support their students and encourage engagement, creativity and innovation within teaching, as well as in their own practice.

Implementation

Working with three specialist practitioners (A, B and C) who teach on the Masters courses in different disciplines, NUA explored, through

narrative interviews, how teaching influences the professional practice of academics at the university. All three of the practitioners were enthusiastic about both their professional practice and their teaching, and could see the benefits of being a practitioner and a teacher and of 'being part of a wider community' (A). They felt a sense of belonging as teachers, where they could build new or continued relationships across different arts disciplines. The sharing of knowledge and skills with both colleagues and students in collaborative learning was valuable, as each saw ideas and artefacts from different angles, encouraging diverse interaction and discussions.



I think it can't not have changed my practice... it makes me look differently at my own work, more critically.

Specialist Practitioner A



I'm revising certain skills that I've been teaching... just because they [students] are doing it and I want to broaden their scope of that particular aspect... and they've been pushing me to upskill, reskill.

Specialist Practitioner B



It's that constant flux of ideas back and forth, just as you see something in a student's work... it invites you to look back at what you are doing.

Specialist Practitioner C

The practitioners felt strongly that teaching does influence their professional practice and complement it. Indeed, they saw separating the practice and the teaching as impossible, in that they are reciprocal.

Results

Teaching and the professional practice of these specialist practitioners is holistic – not separated – and teaching and practice have become intertwined.

There were some fears that if the practitioner-teachers left teaching they might become isolated. Emotions are also entangled within this; one practitioner-teacher (C) noted the excitement of their own practice, and the challenge of having to rein themselves in, and explore who the practice is for, who is going to understand it, and how the students may react to it. Teaching encourages the practitioners to challenge themselves and reflect more deeply on their own practice.

More Information

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CASE STUDY 06:

ARTS UNIVERSITY BOURNEMOUTH AND AARDMAN ANIMATION: INDUSTRIAL SECONDMENTS FOR PRACTITIONER-TEACHERS



Working again with the dedicated, creative team at Aardman was a fulfilling and rewarding experience and I am grateful to both Aardman and the AUB for enabling it to happen. I can now share this experience with my students, ensuring the processes, software and team-working methodology is incorporated into my role as Senior Lecturer.

Richard Haynes - Senior Lecturer, Arts University Bournemouth

Background

Arts University Bournemouth (AUB) is a leading specialist arts and design institution. It embraces a 'maker' culture, with students taught by highly influential teams that include creative industry practitioners. This practitioner-led teaching is vital in ensuring that graduates have industry 'currency' in terms of their knowledge and skills, and supports very high levels of employability. But teaching can also directly benefit practitioners, too.

Richard Haynes worked as a stop-motion animator at Cosgrove Hall Films, Manchester, and at Aardman Features, Bristol, prior to becoming a lecturer at Arts University Bournemouth. While at Aardman, Richard worked on various films, including *Shaun the Sheep* and *The Pirates: In an Adventure with Scientists*.

Implementation

Through teaching, practitioners are able to put their understanding of their specialist area(s) to the test. By sharing knowledge of techniques, working methods, processes and ways of working within a team, a practitioner is enabled to challenge the ideology and methodology behind what they do. Richard found that he questioned what it actually meant to be an animator by learning with the students through the teaching. He did, of course, pass on his experience as a stop-motion animator, but the changing landscape within the industry was often reflected through the students in finding out what they actually engaged with as an audience. This made for a refreshing, exhilarating and inspiring atmosphere, as opposed to the often-limited, 'stuck-in-its-ways bubble' invoked by working in an established animation company.

In 2017, Richard undertook an industry secondment offered by AUB. This innovative scheme allowed him to return to Aardman to work on his third feature film, *Early Man*, directed by Nick Park and released in January 2018. Working as an animator, Richard brought various characters (puppets) to life, frame by frame, across a variety of scenes on different sets. Returning to industry allowed Richard an

opportunity to "practice what I preach" working with professional puppets, in a professional environment, on a project for the big screen. The secondment strengthened existing relationships with Aardman, in particular with the Head of Animation. It also allowed Richard the opportunity to update his knowledge and confidence of the software used for stop motion (DragonFrame), taught at AUB.

Results

As a practitioner returning to industry, Richard found, perhaps surprisingly, that his experience of teaching had an impact on his work with really positive results. He felt that his work was 'slicker' and 'more in tune' with the principles behind the fundamentals of animation, character and performance. This resulted in the creation of characters whose intricate movements were 'clutter-free' and 'clear'. Teaching gave Richard a new perspective; an over-arching view of the animation landscape and its principles, which resulted in a more 'controlled performance' of the characters when he returned to undertake professional work.

Recognising the value that practitioner-led teaching can bring, Aardman and the university are exploring the concept of an 'animator swap' whereby Richard would regularly return to industry, with animators undertaking some visiting lecturing at AUB, supported and 'trained' by Richard.

More Information

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CASE STUDY 07:

HARTPURY UNIVERSITY: INTERWEAVING TEACHING AND COACHING



The Triple-C is an opportunity to ‘make sense’ of our own experiences as practitioners and lecturers. Thomas and I share our views on significant moments in our practices and most importantly, we constructively challenge each other to see things in a different way.

Luciana De Martin Silva – Programme Manager FdSc Sports Coaching

Background

Hartpury University has over 1,500 students, with small cohorts averaging 15–30 students across our BSc (Hons) and FdSc Sports Coaching degree programmes. This provides an opportunity to develop close relationships with students and to avoid “courses that are often considered as fine in theory but divorced from the gritty realities of practice”.¹⁸



Implementation

To ensure a practice-based grounding, the course leaders on the BSc and FdSc are both active coaches, with over 15 years’ experience. Thomas Legge leads the BSc (Hons) Sports Coaching programme and is the Associate Head of Department for HE Sport. Thomas is also a rugby union coach, working with the senior university teams at Hartpury, and has Regional Age Grade experience. Luciana De Martin Silva leads the FdSc Sports Coaching programme and is a Principal Lecturer with a key focus on teaching and learning. Luciana is also the Head Coach for Hartpury’s futsal team and Joint Head Coach for the England deaf women’s futsal team.

Thomas and Luciana teach together in one of the core modules – ‘Coaching Pedagogy’ – and hold regular joint ‘Triple-Cs’ (coaching coffee catch-ups), to explore current experiences and challenges as critical friends.



Having a critical friend, such as Luciana, enables me to talk openly about challenges within both coaching and teaching practise. Through our coaching coffee catch-ups, I am able to gauge Luciana’s opinions on challenging experiences alongside possible solutions.

Thomas Legge - Programme Manager BSc (Hons) Sport Coaching

18. R. Jones, K. Morgan & K. Harris, ‘Developing Coaching Pedagogy: Seeking a Better Integration of Theory and Practice’, in *Sport, Education and Society*, vol.170 (2012), p.313.

Results

Over the years, Thomas and Luciana have found that their dual-roles bring benefits to both coaching and teaching roles.

As teachers, Thomas and Luciana have found that students respect those who 'walk the talk', helping them to build relationships of trust and respect, which are essential for student learning and satisfaction.¹⁹ Luciana's involvement with the international England deaf futsal players, where communication is key, helped her to engage with different populations. It increased her interest in the work undertaken by the learning support department at university level, as well as adopting strategies that can support students who have any kind of disability in the classroom.

Practitioner-led teaching also presents challenges, not least that of consistently implementing theoretical expertise. For example, as teachers, Thomas and Luciana often highlight the need to challenge individuals at different levels to allow for learning to take place. Yet, at times, they find themselves questioning whether the level chosen

was right for the students and players. The opportunity to discuss doubts and frustrations with each other through Triple-Cs has served as a strength, allowing Thomas and Luciana to directly influence each other's immediate practice, whether that is teaching or coaching, as part of a small community of practice.

For example, while coaching U16 regional athletes, one Triple-C explored the importance of a justified approach to practice. When coaching a team, it can become difficult to appreciate the individual learner, as with a class of students. Yet as coaches, Thomas and Luciana agreed they have a moral obligation to work hard to challenge the individuals within a team context in an attempt to stretch their learning capacity.

Luciana and Thomas are happy to critically discuss the challenges in both teaching and coaching. Nonetheless, it is the positive cross-experiences they share that enable them to remain committed to student learning, and passionate about being practitioner-led teachers within higher education.

Coaching and Teaching

Opportunities:

- Deconstruct coaching practice in light of relevant learning theories.
- Discuss the change in athletes/learners coming through i.e. differences in expectations/behaviours and how we might use that in coaching/teaching.
- Identify ways of assessing performance/progression. How this applies to both coaching practice and teaching.

Challenges:

- How we stimulate the individual within a team context i.e. athlete within a team or student within a cohort.
- Methods of challenging all learners within a complex social environment. Moral obligation to ensure everyone is being stretched in their learning.
- Athlete/Student expectations i.e. what they 'want' and 'need' being different.

Figure 3: An example of key opportunities and challenges discussed in Triple-C reflective conversations

More Information

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19. G. Gibbs, *Dimension of Quality*, pp.21-26.

CASE STUDY 08:

THE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC PERFORMANCE: THE BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH YOUNG SONGWRITERS



Encouraging students to work together to challenge and support each others' development has helped me to manage relationships and scenarios in my professional life as a songwriter.

Jonathan Whiskerd, Programme Leader BA (Hons) Songwriting

Background

The Institute of Contemporary Music Performance (ICMP) is a specialist alternative provider based in London. Some 1,000 students are enrolled at ICMP, with approximately 200 on the BA (Hons) in Songwriting alone.

Implementation

The majority of the teaching faculty at ICMP are music industry practitioners who are teaching as part of a portfolio career. Staff see their role as facilitating the creative and technical development of students.

Teaching is conducted through a workshop model, centred around the processes of writing music (in the case of the BA [Hons] Songwriting), or other aspects of music creation, production, performance and business, depending on the programme. The facilitation of these collaborative, discursive group sessions requires great skill and care, as you are usually dealing with a wide range of skillsets and levels of experience.

Results

ICMP has seen that there are many benefits to having teaching as part of a portfolio of professional activity.

In order to successfully facilitate the creative development of students, and help them become successful songwriters, staff must critically assess how they have achieved successful results in their own practice, and how they navigated challenges and failures. Cultivating this self-awareness inevitably helps faculty develop in parallel with students.

Working with younger musicians and songwriters also provides insights into their worlds, including how they perceive, consume and value music. As teacher-practitioners often continue to write for and with emerging artists, this awareness of changing trends, values and styles within popular music is incredibly useful.

Many of the young people at ICMP have never previously had any feedback on their music-making, so they can be understandably

resistant to the idea of allowing a tutor or their peers to become critically involved in their work. Facilitating this process so that the student is able to understand and trust in the efficacy of this model, and has the confidence to share their creative process with their peers, means teacher-practitioners develop keen emotional intelligence, and gives them the skills to manage complex relationships. This can be particularly useful to their work in other spheres, for example when writing for new artists.

Finally, the forensic examination of hundreds of songs per semester, with the aim of identifying improvements and developments, gives staff a powerful working knowledge of how to write songs, both from a technical and an artistic perspective.

More Information

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3. THE

BENEFITS TO

EMPLOYERS



To equip the future workforce with the appropriate skills, knowledge and expertise, businesses need to play a more active role in the design and delivery of the curriculum.

University Alliance, Technical and professional excellence: Perspectives on learning and teaching (2017)

If it is true that students with experience of practice-informed learning are better prepared for the world of work, this is beneficial to employers as much as to students themselves.

Those employers directly engaged in practitioner-led teaching stand to gain the most. Students can add capacity and new ideas to organisations, while also developing their own skills. Furthermore, by helping to design and deliver courses, employers are able to ensure that graduates have both the subject-specific knowledge and the transferable skills that employers value. A ready supply of talented graduates means that local companies can invest and grow without fearing a brain drain; this is good for business and good for local areas.

Again, students who undertake placements with specific employers may use that link in order to find work with the employer after graduation; students will have both the specific skills needed in that business, and a better understanding of how the business operates than their competitor candidates who have not undertaken a placement with the company. Furthermore, employers contributing to practice-led teaching get to identify potential employees earlier on.

Businesses, especially small and medium enterprises (SMEs), can also find it hard to engage with universities, locking them out of what may be the most significant driver of innovation and investment in the local economy.²⁰ By contributing to teaching, businesses can find new routes to engage with the HE sector, facilitating new collaborations, research and innovation.



Questions to consider:

- What factors support or limit business involvement in higher education teaching and learning?
- Do employers recognise the benefits of staff teaching to their business, and incorporate it into promotion criteria?
- How can institutions utilise teaching links to engage more widely with the private sector?
- What steps could institutions take to foster links with SMEs?

20. University Alliance, *Technical and professional excellence*, p.11.



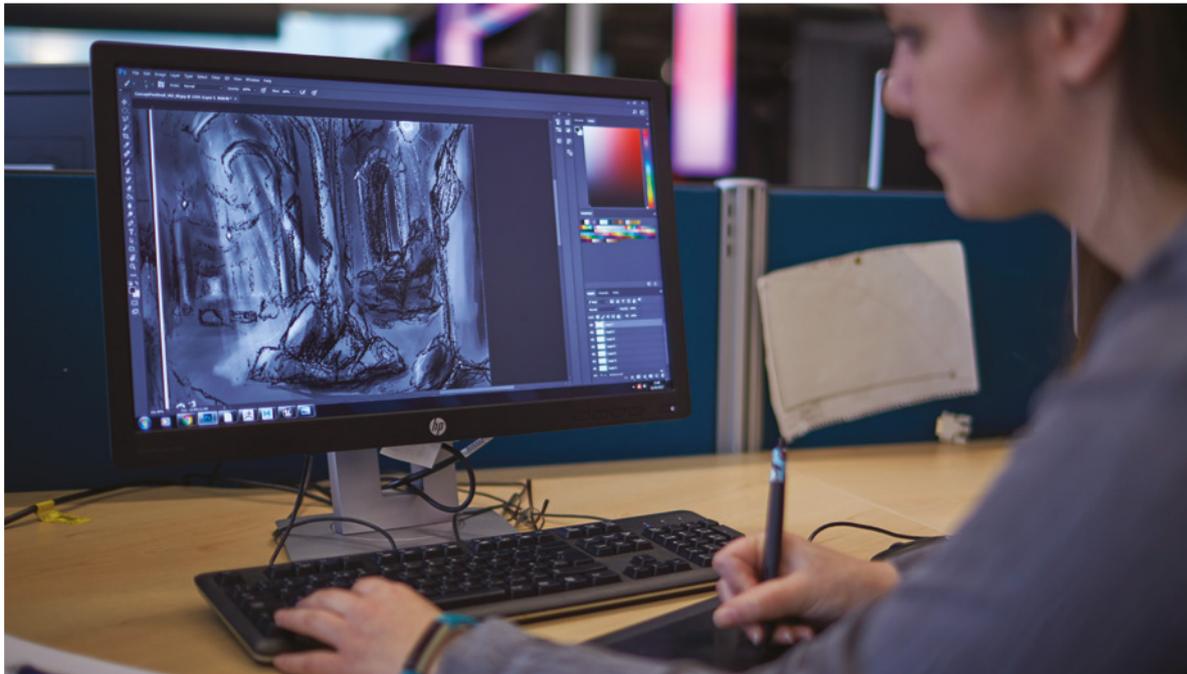
CASE STUDY 09:

ABERTAY UNIVERSITY: DRIVING LOCAL GROWTH



Recognising the business and cultural potential of the [computer games] industry at a time when some in the higher education sector viewed it with scepticism, Abertay has stayed the course and its far-sighted decision to invest has been wonderfully rewarded.

Lord Puttnam, founder of Creative Skillset, former chairman of NESTA, and director of Chariots of Fire





The games industry changes at such a rapid pace; so the fact that Abertay students come out of university ready to work with clients - and in many cases have bags of real-world experience - really sets them apart.

David Hamilton, Executive Vice President of mobile games firm Ninja Kiwi Europe, and Abertay University graduate

Background

Abertay University has a well-established reputation as a leading video games university, having launched the world's first degree in the discipline in 1997. Over the last 20 years, the university has pioneered this field of academic study, creating courses deeply embedded in industry to keep up with the fast-paced games market.

In 2009, the university was awarded Creative Skillset 'Media Academy' status, recognising a commitment to professional/vocational education, industry engagement and graduate employability. According to NESTA's Next Gen report, Creative Skillset graduates are almost three times more likely to find a job in the games industry on graduation, compared with non-accredited counterparts.

Implementation

To ensure students are prepared for careers in industry, Abertay University has developed a 'workplace simulation' model, which builds on first principles, exploits peer learning and takes a practical approach whereby students create real games as preparation for employment.

In their third year, students form multi-disciplinary teams, including artists, programmers, designers and musicians. Students are set real-world project briefs, for example to create games and digital media projects. The briefs are set by industry professionals, who serve as mentors to the team, helping them to produce high-quality projects that often go on to be used professionally and commercially.

The university has worked hard to forge and sustain links with leading international organisations such as Sony Interactive Entertainment, Disney, Microsoft, Crytek and Ubisoft.

Results

Through teaching rooted in professional practice, Abertay graduates leave university with the skills to go straight into the workplace or start their own business.

Abertay graduates supply much of the local talent pipeline to the expanding Dundee sector, which includes more than 20 games companies. They also contribute to the games sector across Scotland more widely. Scotland is the second-fastest growing cluster in the UK games industry, with headcount growth of 27% between March 2016 and November 2017.

Abertay computer games graduates play key roles in a games development sector that employs more than 1,500 staff in Scotland across 91 companies, with an additional 2,800 employees in jobs that indirectly support the sector.

By embracing practitioner-led, real-world teaching, Abertay University has helped drive forward its local and regional economy.

More Information

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CASE STUDY 10:

**RAVENSBOURNE UNIVERSITY
LONDON AND MOZILLA:
COLLABORATING TO DEVELOP**



Working with Mozilla for this project was a great experience, as it taught me what other generations need and how to make their lives easier.

Tavanna, Student Participant



It's been great to work with such a bright, enthusiastic group of students, and inspiring to see them approach the challenge with fresh eyes and open minds.

Sharon Bautista, User Experience Researcher, Mozilla

Background

Ravensbourne holds a number of relationships with industry organisations. One of Ravensbourne's most important collaborations is its ongoing relationship with Mozilla, a global software community aiming to keep the internet "healthy, open and accessible to all". Through the partnership, Mozilla has delivered lectures to the Product Design course at Ravensbourne.

Implementation

In 2016/17, Ravensbourne and Mozilla expanded their partnership, running a new project that challenged students to develop solutions to enhance web browser accessibility for those with physical or sensory impairments, mental health issues, learning disabilities, or little familiarity with the internet.

Students worked in small groups, with guidance from Ravensbourne Product Design tutors and expert assistance from Mozilla's engineers, who gave online lectures from the US. The students gathered information about their users and the technology available, using this to come up with a broad range of possible ideas, which were then evaluated through paper prototyping, digital prototyping and user testing.

The project gave students a great opportunity to work with industry figures on a professional brief, while also exposing them to a lesser-known side of the product design industry.

Results

The winning group of product design students was awarded a £1,000 prize for their Firefox add-on, *Spectrum*, designed to enhance the browsing process for those with phonological dyslexia, with a focus on improving their reading experience.

In turn, Mozilla was able to gather ideas for solutions from Ravensbourne students, discovering what their most pressing concerns were in terms of browser accessibility.

The partnership also has benefits that extend into the wider technology and digital sectors. The relationship between Mozilla and Ravensbourne has allowed Mozilla to host 'MozFest' at Ravensbourne's North Greenwich campus once a year. This is an opportunity for scientists, journalists, policy makers and technologists to network and discuss the future of the internet. Commenting on the event, former MozFest Director Michelle Thorne said: "I can't overstate how much Ravensbourne is the perfect partner for the festival... we really benefited from [Ravensbourne's] skills, kindness and experience."

More Information

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CASE STUDY 11:

ST MARY'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, BELFAST AND THE INNOVATION FACTORY: STUDENT ENGAGEMENT WITH SMES



We were delighted to welcome the students to Innovation Factory (IF), and we see partnerships like this as mutually beneficial. This was reflected in how quickly our customers were to sign up and get involved. Maybe in the future one of the students in the room will be back at IF as a customer and owner of an innovative and growing business.

Shane Smith, Community Engagement Officer with IF



Background

Liberal Arts students at St Mary's University College Belfast study Industrial Relations in their final year. This has traditionally been assessed by a case study in an examination. In 2016, the Business Studies department decided that students would gain a deeper understanding of the topics through a 'real-life' case study.

Staff approached Innovation Factory (IF), a local innovation centre that supports start-ups, entrepreneurs and emerging businesses, and agreed to partner on a 'real-life' academic project in 2017.

Implementation

In the first year of the project, 12 students visited IF and heard pitches from four SMEs, working across sectors from tourism to technology, who wanted assistance to address a business development challenge.

Working in small groups, the students identified an SME to work with as consultants. This presented an opportunity for the students to learn about the realities of running a business, while adding value to the SMEs in a way that could make a real difference to the business' future development.

With support from academic staff, students took time to reflect on the information presented, and returned to IF to present their findings, solutions and recommendations to the business start-ups. They also presented final reports, detailing their recommendations.

Rather than a traditional exam, students were assessed on their presentation and report, as well as feedback from the SMEs, giving businesses a direct role in the assessment process. To differentiate students, an individual assignment was also created, based on a guest lecture delivered to the students by the Labour Relations Agency.

Outcomes

The new model uses practice-informed learning to the benefit of students and SMEs alike.

Students were enthusiastic about the opportunity to enhance their skills, and valued the change from traditional forms of assessment; they also performed well overall.

Feedback from the SMEs was positive, with student helping to address specific challenges. Some were so impressed by students' work that they expressed interest in being involved in future years.

As a result, the business department decided to repeat the project each academic year. In the second year, the number of students has grown from 12 to 20. With an ever-changing range of businesses based at IF, there is no shortage of future partners.

More information

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I feel the experience gained from taking part in a real-life project is invaluable. Having to research and present the results in a client-like situation is an experience I feel will benefit me post-university.

Michael – 3rd Year BA Liberal Arts Student



CASE STUDY 12:

THE UNIVERSITY OF WINCHESTER: PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE 'IN THE FIELD'

Background

The BSc Hons Archaeological Practice with Professional Placement is one of a suite of programmes in archaeology at the University of Winchester. The department was the first in the country to create a specific Archaeological Practice degree in the late 1990s, and many of its graduates are working successfully within professional, developer-funded archaeology.

This sector is underpinned by planning regulations that require applications to be considered for archaeological impact prior to construction. Work ranges from small local investigations, such as changes to homes in historic areas, to national infrastructure projects, such as Heathrow Terminal 5 and HS2. Developer-funded archaeology is the single biggest employer of graduate archaeologists, currently accounting for approximately 4,000 jobs in the sector.

As such, the Archaeology team at Winchester see themselves not solely as educators, but as practitioners with a remit to train the next generation of professional archaeologists. Students acquire valuable capabilities while studying, but there are certain aspects of being an archaeologist that can only be learned 'on the job'. For example, students must learn to recognise subtle changes in soil composition, which is impossible to teach in a classroom environment. Students must also gain confidence; when first faced with doing 'real' archaeology, many students require close supervision and encouragement in their use of equipment and tools.



Implementation

The professional placement is the primary setting for acquiring practical industry experience. Initially, students could opt to undertake a month-long placement instead of a dissertation; in 2015, a year-long placement was introduced as part of a four-year sandwich degree. This placement might be within a commercial unit, a local authority environmental or heritage department, or a museum.

In addition, all archaeology students complete four weeks of assessed fieldwork on a departmental project between their first and second years. Nearly all lecturers on the programme are practising archaeologists who are also running field research projects, which enables students to undertake fieldwork in a range of different archaeological contexts. Current projects include a multi-period site in Georgia, a Romano-British temple site, a Bronze Age barrow, a Second World War RAF base, and a medieval site in Germany.

Results

The professional placement gives employers the chance to see students 'in situ', where their ability to be punctual, work hard, get on with people, and work with enthusiasm comes across much more powerfully than in a CV.

Employer feedback on recent placements was that if the students were graduating tomorrow they would employ them. This keenness on the part of employers is testament to the quality of the students' work, and also reflects a shift in the state of the archaeology labour market. Recent proposals (such as HS2) have brought about a huge demand for graduate archaeologists, which has prompted concerns that not enough are being produced in the UK. The students being trained at Winchester engage in the whole process of excavation, using modern methodologies that comply with the UK's Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' standards and guidance. They are therefore well placed to meet this growing demand as the UK invests in infrastructure.

More information

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4. WIDER SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS



Students who participate in student-community engagement are more likely to engage in pro-social activities when they have graduated... Many students, particularly those from wealth backgrounds, have had their eyes opened to social injustice.

Millican and Bourner, *Learning to Make a Difference* (2014)

Drawing business into the academy and sending students into the economy creates a wider ecosystem of exchange, helping businesses engage with universities as centres of local and regional economic strength, and allowing universities to share their impact more widely.

As already highlighted, involving industry in higher education results in students graduating with the specific skills needed. But the benefits may not be limited to purely local industries; their effects can be felt across the national economy, for example where practice-informed learning supports employment in a key national industry such as financial services. For such economic impacts to continue to be felt, practice-informed learning must be responsive to the changing needs of the society it serves.

Nor are the benefits of practice-informed purely financial. Education has always had a social benefit to its students; however, some forms of practice-based learning may be designed in a way that shares this social benefit with the wider community. For example, a theatre roadshow allows disadvantaged young people to access live theatre, while giving students experience of mounting a touring production. Similarly, a pro-bono legal advice centre offers support for people who could not otherwise access advice, while exposing students to new areas of legal practice and giving them more 'client-facing' experience. Such projects can also foster 'active citizenship', which can have a wide range of associated benefits, from encouraging voluntary action to boosting political engagement.²¹

All told, the benefits of practice-informed learning can be seen to spread out like ripples on a pond, starting with those directly involved in the teaching process, and then spreading out to touch specific employers, and to meet the needs of an ever-changing economy.



Questions to consider:

- How will the Industrial Strategy further embed closer industry-university links?
- How can institutions, employers and local enterprise partnerships collaborate to make the most of practice-informed learning?
- What can institutions do to add social value to their local economies through practice-informed learning and teaching?

21. GuildHE/NUS, *Active Citizenship: The role of higher education* (London: GuildHE, 2016), pp.6-7.



CASE STUDY 13:

THE ROYAL CENTRAL SCHOOL OF SPEECH AND DRAMA AND COMPLICITÉ CREATIVE LEARNING: TAKING PERFORMANCE TO PUPILS



“[The project offered pupils] an opportunity to see high quality work in their own space, to set a standard which they can aspire towards”

“[Pupils] were able to gain ideas for devising and it has been used to practice writing a live theatre review which is part of their GCSE exam.

Staff Feedback

Background

As a specialist performing arts school, The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (RCSSD) ensures that all our students gain experience of developing and delivering professional-standard shows and performances. This means that students have the skills they need for a career in the performing arts, and can also have impacts well beyond this core audience.



Implementation

In January 2017, Complicité Creative Learning partnered with The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama to produce *A Studio Season* which ran at the Pleasance Theatre, London, from 25 February to 5 March 2017. Complicité Associates Catherine Alexander, Marcello Magni and Kirsty Housley directed students from the BA Acting Collaborative and Devised Theatre course in three devised pieces: *Tomorrow I'll Be Twenty*, *Maktub* and *War & War*. Second-year students from the BA Theatre Practice course formed members of the production team. Following on from this, *Tomorrow I'll Be Twenty* was selected to tour UK schools for a pilot project in September 2017.

The company included alumni from RCSSD's BA CDT and BA Theatre Practice courses and was directed by Catherine Alexander, with RCSSD alumnus Martins Imhangbe as Assistant Director. As this was a rework of an existing production, the company rehearsed for one week before going on a one-week tour to secondary schools in Bradford, Wakefield and Leeds.

Results

RCSSD students delivered a 75-minute show and workshop to Dixons Academy, Royds, Notre Dame College and Ossett High School; this included a Q&A before the show at Dixons Academy with Director Catherine Alexander and Complicité Creative Learning Producer Poppy Keeling. Students from Lady Lumley's School also attended the performance at Dixons Academy.

During the week, two members of the cast led a workshop for 15 professional actors with learning difficulties at Mind the Gap in Bradford. Approximately 150 students across the four schools took part in devising workshops led by two members of the cast. Taking the show into schools gave pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds access to contemporary theatre, which might otherwise have been inaccessible to them. RCSSD prospectuses and tote bags were given to each workshop participant. The performances were seen by approximately 380 GCSE and A-level Drama students.

More Information

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CASE STUDY 14:

THE UNIVERSITY OF LAW: PRO-BONO FOR EVERYONE



Maria was organised and able to import the knowledge she has gained through her obvious experience. She struck the right balance between letting me have some freedom and independence whilst intervening when appropriate. I have learned a lot as a result.

Antonia made me feel at ease and made it very easy to ask questions. I enjoyed the independence given and the direct client contact

Student Feedback

Background

The University of Law is a specialist university, which offers undergraduate and postgraduate routes into the legal professions, as well as courses for qualified lawyers.

One key way for trainee solicitors to gain experience to prepare for their careers is to undertake a placement at the Legal Advice Centre, based at the University of Law's Bloomsbury campus. The Legal Advice Centre provides pro-bono advice to people who might otherwise be unable to access support, allowing them to navigate the hugely confusing and daunting litigation process.



Implementation

The Legal Advice Centre was set up to give trainee solicitors, who were not previously able to gain experience of contentious work (i.e. work that could lead to litigation), the opportunity to advise clients in contentious matters on a pro-bono basis. Trainees conduct confidential interviews and then prepare written advice for clients. This work experience also earns academic credit through a programme of study called the Trainee Litigation Programme.

Trainees are supervised directly by fully trained solicitors, who specialise in housing, immigration and family law. They offer support and supervision to the trainees who attend the centre, not only performing the regulatory supervision required, but also facilitating feedback and reflection on the skills trainees learn during their work experience.



Outcomes

The University of Law's Legal Advice Centre was one of the first university law centres to be recognised under new regulations that allowed alternative business structures into the legal advice market. The centre now operates as a law firm in its own right, with potential to grow the specialist advice and support that it offers to the community, and to offer students at the university greater variety in practitioner-led clinical experience.

Trainees give very positive feedback of their pro-bono learning experience at the centre, which allows them to gain experience across areas of law, often very different to those in which they will end up working. Assisting those who need legal advice but cannot afford it often has a big impact on the trainees' view of their social responsibilities as lawyers in providing access to justice. Indeed, the trainees often return to the centre as qualified lawyers to engage in further pro-bono work.

This free legal representation service is often commented on favourably by judges at county courts and tribunals, who are grateful for the assistance the trainees have given to litigants to enable them to manage their cases efficiently and effectively. The success of this programme is such that it has now been extended to offer a Masters programme to students of the Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC).

More Information

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CASE STUDY 15:

**THE LONDON INSTITUTE OF BANKING
AND FINANCE: TRAINING FOR THE
FUTURE ECONOMY**



Background

The financial services industry is one of the UK's success stories; it employs over 2.2 million people across the UK, two thirds of whom are outside London, and contributes almost 11% to GDP.²² The sheer size of the industry alone is critical to the economy.

One reason for the industry's success is that it does not stand still. The growth of fintech means the landscape of the sector is changing for good, yet there is limited expertise in vital skill areas, including cyber security and compliance. Traditionally, financial services organisations have tended to recruit from universities, often only considering graduates from the most 'elite' institutions. However, these recruitment pools are no longer sufficiently diverse to keep up with this rapidly evolving sector; as its employment needs shift, banking faces a serious 'talent crunch'. Such a shortage makes the creation of apprenticeships in financial services central to the sector's growth and future employment opportunities.

Following recent reforms to public policy and the advent of the apprenticeship levy in 2017, some banks are seeking to diversify their intake, and, in doing so, widen their skills base. For apprenticeships to be the success they deserve to be, and for the UK economy to reap rewards, the quality of apprenticeship training should match up to any opportunities available through studying a degree. Pure academic input is crucial in order to uphold the rigour and credibility of both the higher education and apprenticeships regimes. However, financial institutions are increasingly looking to partner with education providers that can develop their employees by teaching up-to-date, in-depth knowledge that is relevant to the role they do every day and the fast-moving industry in which they work.

Implementation

The London Institute of Banking & Finance (LIBF) is doing just that: delivering a practitioner-based degree apprenticeship to employees of a major UK banking group. Starting with our foundational certificate in business banking and conduct, which has been developed by sector experts, apprentices gain a sound grounding in industry fundamentals from day one of the programme.

By virtue of an academic faculty comprising individuals with many years of senior-level experience in banking and finance, practitioner-led teaching and learning is woven throughout the whole apprenticeship, from the design of the learning materials to the blended delivery and curriculum, recognising what is happening in the workplace through case studies, tailored activities and work-based summative projects.

Industry professionals are also invited to join the face-to-face element of the course. This can take many forms, including guest lectures and industry visits, with apprentices recently enjoying a presentation at the Bank of England, for instance. What cannot be compromised is the diversity and richness of the experiences offered to the apprentices, and the explicit interlinking of the 'classroom' and the day job.

Outcomes

It is too early to tell how widespread and successful degree apprenticeships may become; much could depend on political commitment to this new model of delivery. Nonetheless, employers are already keen to play an active role in ensuring that students get the skills they need and enter the workforce quickly, while students value the chance to learn on the job. LIBF is excited to be at the cutting edge of this new model of education, which is so well aligned with its long tradition of training people to meet the needs of the financial services sector, and which in turn is crucial to the success of the UK economy.

More information

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22. TheCityUK, *Key Facts about UK-based Financial and related Professional Services*, (London: TheCityUK, 2017), p. 4.

5. THE CHALLENGES OF PRACTICE-INFORMED LEARNING



Training and staff development for teachers lacks relevance for the 'special' roles of teacher practitioner.

D. Clews & S. Mallinder, *Looking Out: Key Report* (2010)

Practice-informed learning can have significant benefits, yet delivering teaching and learning based on professional practice can bring challenges for the practitioners and institutions involved.

Successfully delivering practice-informed learning can place an increased burden on institutions, particularly if this involves live briefs. Additional staffing and financial resources may be required, over and above what is needed for more traditional teaching models, while students will need access to facilities to allow them to put what they are learning into practice. That said, some subjects simply could not be taught without such facilities and resources. It would be hard to offer a course in art and design or subjects allied to medicine without studio spaces or clinics; such additional requirements are simply the cost of doing business. Perhaps more demanding is the need to build and maintain lasting relationships with professional partners, whether they be independent businesses or practitioner-teachers; a process which can rely significantly on a few key staff members.

Working with dual professionals can present additional challenges. Most obviously, employing industry experts to deliver teaching can increase the burden on HR services, as individuals may have separate contracts for teaching, preparation and marking. One institution reported having

75 full-time equivalent staff, representing 120 actual staff on over 400 contracts. Not only does this situation increase pressure on HR services, building an academic community of staff and students can be made harder when a large proportion of staff are on fractional or temporary contracts. *Dimensions of Quality* is critical of practitioner-teachers, who “may only spend a few hours a week on campus” and “may not be paid to meet students out of class or to provide detailed comments on their assignments”, potentially limiting their engagement with students’ learning.²³ Yet there is also good evidence that practitioner-teachers routinely play key roles in their institutions, such as year coordinators, subject coordinators, course leaders or programme leaders.²⁴ A more significant problem seems to be that CPD is often not focused on the particular roles of practitioner-teachers; rather it is focused on the teacher while side-lining the practitioner.²⁵

Clear leadership and institutional ‘buy-in’ to practice-informed learning is crucial to addressing all these issues. Maintaining links with industry can be exhausting if this relies on a single person. Institutional culture is key to ensuring that practitioner-teachers are integrated into the wider faculty and providing appropriate staff development, so that dual professionals are not left feeling that they belong in neither the academic nor the professional sphere.

Questions to consider:

- How do you actively manage the HR, timetabling and training challenges of part-time staff working in industry as well as within your institution?
- How do higher education providers communicate the benefits of practice-informed learning to students and non-practitioner staff?
- Are industry practitioners encouraged, or paid, to undergo teacher training?
- How are part-time staff supported to feel part of an academic community?

23. Gibbs, *Dimensions of Quality*, pp.16-17. This tallies with more recent research. For example, the 2017 *Student Academic Experience Survey* found that, among students whose experience of higher education was worse than expected, two of the key concerns were too little interaction with staff, and staff not accessible. Neves & N. Hillman, 2017 *Student Academic Experience Survey*, p.20.

24. D. Clews & S. Mallinder, *Looking Out: Effective engagement with creative and cultural enterprise Arts HE and the Creative industries Key Report*, p.43.

25. D. Clews & S. Mallinder, *Looking Out: Key Report*, p.47.



CASE STUDY 16:

**ST MARY'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
BELFAST AND BELFAST ZOO: SUSTAINING
PRACTICE-INFORMED COLLABORATION**



The real-life project was an interesting area of study with the collection of research, data and examination of target markets.

Aodhan – BEd Student



Background

For several years, first-year students on Liberal Arts and BEd post-primary courses at St Mary's University College Belfast completed a module on marketing, assessed by an end-of-year exam. Staff felt that this model did not sufficiently explore the knowledge gained throughout the year, and could be improved on.

Drawing on the experience of assessing third-year Liberal Arts students through 'consultancy' style projects with local SMEs, the Business Studies department developed a new model to assess the marketing module for 2017–18.

Implementation

In collaboration with Belfast Zoo, an integrated assignment was created to cover the marketing and economics curriculum in a more innovative manner.

Students worked as teams of consultants to investigate how to grow different visitor demographics, such as senior citizens, primary schools or loyal animal lovers. With support from academic staff, groups considered key visitor traits, such as when and how often they might visit, what secondary spending might appeal to them, and what marketing platforms might be effective. The groups were then tasked with providing recommendations on how to market to the specific visitor. Students were assessed on the basis of their joint report and presentation, as well as an individual report discussing specific microeconomic theories.

The practical nature of the assignment encourages broad and deep 'T-shaped' learning, while the teacher takes on the role of facilitator. The project enhances students' employability as well as their written and communication skills, and helps them begin to develop professional networks.

Outcomes

Early feedback suggests that the project is popular, with students more engaged in their learning, while the zoo has been impressed by the hands-on approach of students.

A key challenge will be the sustainability of the project in the long-term. The third-year 'consultancy' project that inspired this new model works with a local incubator for SMEs, giving it a regular supply of new organisations with which to engage. This first-year project requires a single, large and well-established business to support the number of students involved, but it would not be reasonable to ask the same organisation to run the project every year. This means course leaders must find other, similar organisations willing to be involved, and reshape the project accordingly.

To address this challenge, staff are engaging with local businesses and seeking suggestions from students. Several potential partners for the next year have been identified, including tour companies, and food and drinks companies. However, it is clear that this model relies on committed staff to ensure its ongoing success. This could present a significant barrier if key staff were to leave. It is therefore also important to get 'buy-in' from senior management. This will become easier once the success of the project can be demonstrated.

More Information

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The outcome of this type of disruptive innovation in the educational space has been hugely beneficial for the students. The students created a constructive and evaluative portfolio based on a real-life project and the client has valuable outcomes from the research, presentations and reports.

Rita Day – Lecturer in Business Studies (Module Tutor)



CASE STUDY 17:

YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY: COLLABORATING TO DEVELOP PRACTITIONERS IN ITE



Our commitment at YSJ to working in real partnership ensures I keep in touch with what is happening in schools and this really benefits our students.

Keither Parker

Background

York St John University (YSJU) has been involved in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) since 1841. PGCE programmes aim to deliver education and training that is current and relevant, ensuring student teachers develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to become outstanding teachers and leaders.

Within the School of Education, staff on PGCE programmes must hold qualified teacher status and have significant experience of working in schools. It is also a requirement for staff to maintain and develop their skills as practitioners, because a key aspect of the role is to model effective practice in the classroom so that student teachers can then adapt and implement this in their own school classrooms.





Implementation

Following 18 years as a teacher and school leader in state secondary schools, Keither Parker moved into higher education in 2008. Within the School of Education at YSJU, one of her responsibilities is the teaching, learning and assessment on the Professional Studies modules of the PGCE Secondary programme. These modules focus on strategies for teaching, learning and assessment in school, alongside wider whole-school issues such as behaviour management, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and inclusion, developing professionalism, and the impact of national educational policy and initiatives on schools.

Early on, Keither's recent teaching and senior leadership experience in schools was a strength, with student teacher feedback suggesting they placed great importance on her ability to use recent practical examples to demonstrate key points on all topics. Since then, Keither has found that close collaboration with schools and multi-academy trusts has ensured that she has kept up to date with current practice in a way she had not anticipated.

School partners support the development, teaching and assessment on YSJU PGCE programmes. All programme meetings are partnership-based, with members from both schools and YSJU, and a school leader as Steering Group chair. University staff are represented on strategic boards of teaching schools and the multi-academy trusts that YSJU works with. University staff are also involved in research in schools, often in collaboration with school practitioners and focused on areas of teaching practice.

Furthermore, the university runs a peer learning programme, allowing staff to learn from experts in specific teaching, learning and assessment strategies, for example using new technologies. Similarly, staff can share effective practice, and local, national and international research, at 'Talking about Teaching' events and in other forums. YSJU also encourages staff to achieve Senior Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (SFHEA), demonstrating a sustained record of effectiveness in leading teaching and learning.

Results

Keither has found that the extensive collaboration between YSJU and school partners, with both a focus on the classroom and on broader strategic issues, has nurtured continuing professional development and undoubtedly improved practice on all sides, capitalising on respective expertise to the benefit of our students. Together with opportunities to undertake practitioner research and embed reflective practice, Keither argues that she now has a much broader base of knowledge, understanding and skill than when working in one school context.

More Information

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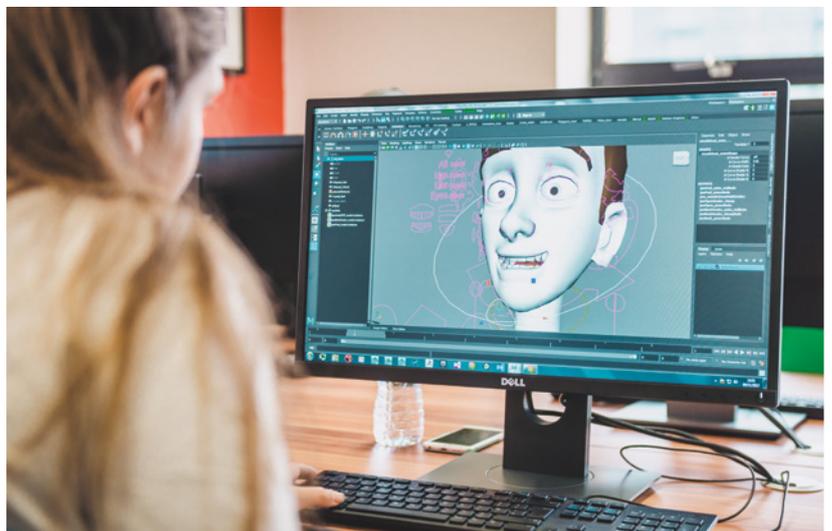
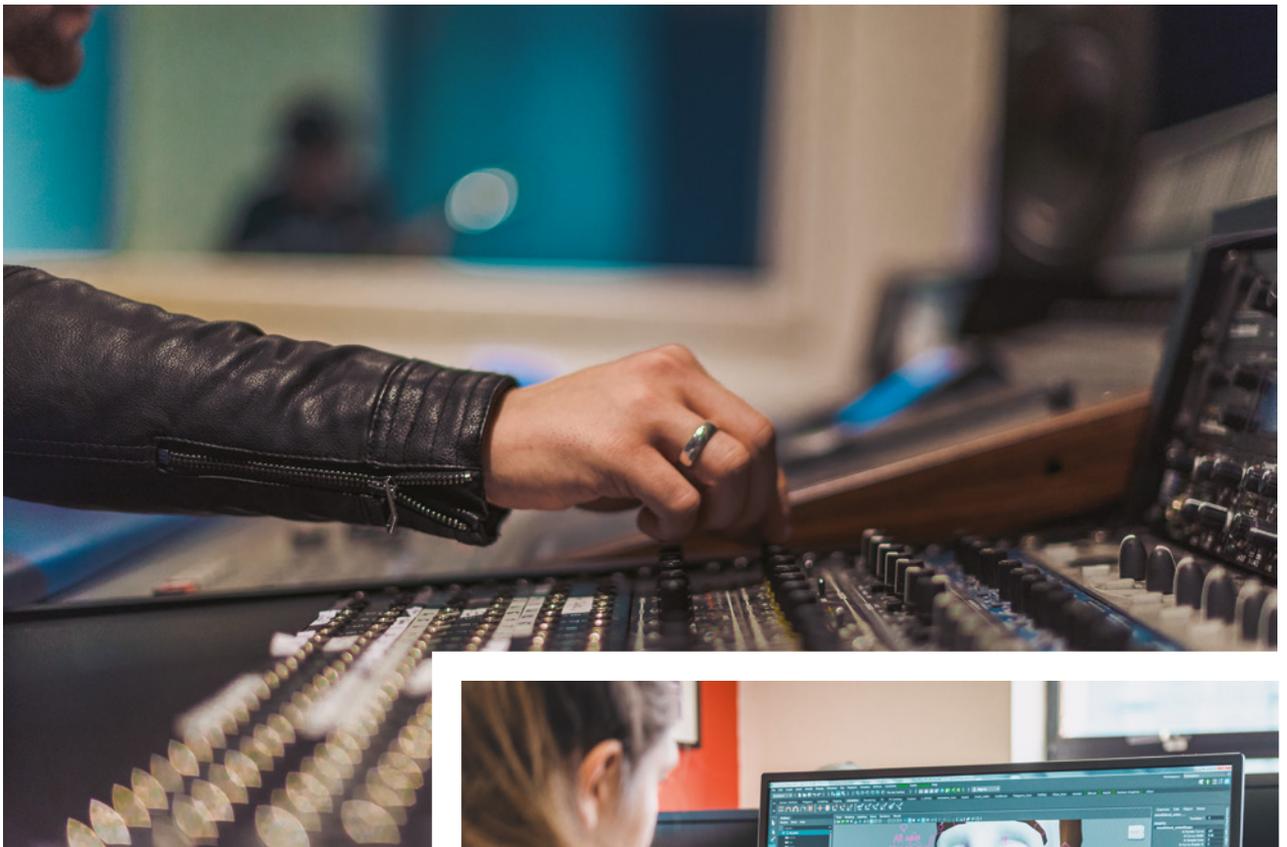
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CASE STUDY 18: SAE INSTITUTE UK: PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT



A role within the creative industries is not only 'what you know' but also, and perhaps more importantly, 'what you do with what you know'.

Rob Finder, Academic Coordinator, SAE London



Background

The creative industries are increasingly important to the UK; in 2016, they accounted for £91.8bn of the UK economy. The UK's reputation in music, film, animation, gaming and the web forms our cultural identity and helps to shape who we are as a nation.

As a result, there is high demand for skilled creative professionals to cater for the ever-growing consumer demand. We need skilled filmmakers, games programmers, audio engineers and animators, among other creative professionals, to be able to not only increase but also to sustain our prevalence on the world stage through our various creative outlets.

Implementation

At the SAE Institute, students are provided with hands-on, practical, 2-year accelerated degrees across six subject areas: Animation, Audio, Film, Games, Music Business and Web. SAE prides itself on providing talented individuals with quality education that prepares them for the industry, giving students the opportunity to work with cutting-edge technology across their courses.

SAE focuses on the learning and application of practical skills vital to a career in creative media. This is beneficial not only within the context of students' education, but also to their industry. Equipping students with practical skills ensures they are prepared to make a positive and meaningful contribution to the creative industries.

However, such hands-on education is not without its challenges. As a faculty, SAE has many teaching staff who are still active in their fields such as by being signed to labels, and working on short films and documentaries for major corporations. Staff must be supported to balance their industry work and part-time teaching.

SAE has worked to improve its onboarding process for such colleagues, equipping them with the teaching tools and pedagogical approaches to be effective inside and outside of the classroom.

Ensuring that part-time or contracted teaching staff are able to benefit from the expertise of the full faculty on campus has also been made a priority by Saad Qureshi, Dean of SAE UK. This is more challenging, as it is harder to work around differing staff schedules; however, by using new technologies, SAE has been able to foster a sense of community and interaction among staff. Saad and his team work hard to encourage discussions and sharing of best practice in order to encourage innovation.

Outcomes

Graduates from SAE have gone on to win Grammys, Oscars and BAFTAs in various areas of the creative industries, making a mark in their respective fields. Recently, a number of second-year students set up of a live events company, Fishbowl Events, as part of the level-5 Live Production module. After a successful first gig at the O2 Academy in Islington, London, they have continued to develop the business, and are putting on regular gigs, and building their reputation in the local area and beyond.

Academic staff also benefit from this model. Many staff have gone on to engage further in industry, for example in practical applications of virtual reality. Conversely, industry practitioners have been inspired by students to take up more academic duties. There is a personal sense of fulfilment in staff producing the next generation of creatives.

More Information

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I don't know anyone that works in the music industry that hasn't got where they are without making mistakes, trial and error and getting their hands dirty.
Lee Erinmez, Programme Coordinator for Music Business, SAE London



CASE STUDY 19:

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHY: ACADEMIC TRAINING FOR CLINICAL PRACTITIONERS

Background

The University College of Osteopathy (the UCO) is a leading provider of osteopathic education, training 47% of the osteopaths currently practicing in the UK. The vast majority of the UCO's clinical and teaching staff are osteopathic practitioners, bringing benefits to students, practitioners and the institution alike.

Students benefit from the breadth of clinical experience their tutors bring to their teaching, which helps to ensure they graduate as well-rounded osteopaths. For practitioners, teaching provides opportunities to evolve their own practice, as well as maintaining awareness of current developments within osteopathy and the healthcare sector.

The UCO is fortunate to attract high-calibre practitioners with specialist clinical skills and knowledge. The challenge is to provide a fulfilling balance between private practice and educational roles for these practitioners; to support their professional development as educators; and to ensure the highest standard of education for our students.

Implementation

While practitioner-teachers display exceptional clinical skills, many are often at the start of their journey as educators and lack any formal teacher training.

In response to this, in 2011 the UCO launched a Postgraduate Certificate in Academic and Clinical Practice (PG Cert ACE), designed to provide clinical practitioners with the skills, attitudes and capabilities to become competent educators.

All clinical practitioners employed by the UCO who do not already hold a recognised teaching qualification are expected to commence the PG Cert ACE within two years of starting employment. Funding is provided by the UCO as part of their professional development, and the course is undertaken alongside their teaching and supervisory commitments as part of a collaborative learning approach.

The UCO also fosters informal learning and support through its staff structure. Practitioners work within teams that reflect a range of teaching experience, styles and approaches, while line managers are responsible for working with staff to identify training and support needs as well as opportunities for career progression and professional development.



I have now made some changes in the way that I tutor and teach. I am letting students explore their reasoning processes by carefully listening and observing them... I now understand that the student has his own rhythm and learns at his own speed.

Current UCO Postgraduate Certificate in Academic and Clinical Practice Student

Results

To date, 45 UCO staff members have completed the PG Cert ACE. The course also attracts external applications from clinical practitioners working at other academic institutions across the UK and further afield, including from Italy, Spain, Switzerland and Canada.

In 2015, a flying faculty from the UCO delivered the course to 25 clinical practitioners teaching at the Istituto Superiore Osteopatia (ISO) in Milan, Italy.

Feedback from PG Cert ACE students has suggested the course has had a direct and immediate impact on their teaching, enabling them to reflect on their own approaches, better understand the needs of their students, and implement practical enhancements to the learning experience.

More information

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

The Benefit for Students

- How can practice-informed learning models be integrated into different courses?
- How are students supported to reflect on their skill development and work-focused experiences?
- How are student reflections and feedback used to further enhance teaching and learning?
- Is feedback from staff, practitioners and other partners captured alongside student reflections?

Enhancing Professional Practice

- How can dual professionals in your institution be supported to reflect on the benefits of teaching to their industry or professional practice?
- Do academic career progression routes recognise professional expertise in the criteria for promotion?
- Are industry practitioners supported to enhance their teaching skills, for example through CPD or mentoring?
- What scope is there for dual professionals to take teaching sabbaticals to focus on developing their professional practice?

The Benefits to Employers

- What factors support or limit business involvement in higher education teaching and learning?
- Do employers recognise the benefits of staff teaching to their business and incorporate it into promotion criteria?
- How can institutions utilise teaching links to engage more widely with the private sector?
- What steps could institutions take to foster links with SMEs?

Wider Social and Economic impacts

- How will the Industrial Strategy further embed closer links between industry and universities?
- How can institutions, employers and local enterprise partnerships collaborate to make the most of practice-informed learning?
- What can institutions do to add social value to their local economies through practice-informed learning and teaching?

The Challenges of Practice-informed Learning

- How do you actively manage the HR, timetabling and training challenges of part-time staff working in industry as well as within your institution?
- How do higher education providers communicate the benefits of practice-informed learning to students and non-practitioner staff?
- Are industry practitioners encouraged, or paid, to undergo teacher training?
- How are part-time staff supported to feel part of an academic community?

CONCLUSION

Practitioner-teachers, and practice-informed learning more generally, are highly valued by students for bringing real-world experiences, credibility and access to professional networks, as well as equipping students with the skills necessary to succeed in the workplace.

As this report has shown, the benefits of these learning models extend beyond students to include not only those who are engaged in teaching, but also employers and universities themselves; more should be done to celebrate these benefits, and to ensure that practice-informed learning continues to be enhanced.

There are, of course, some challenges associated with mainstreaming practice-informed learning. While higher education providers should be encouraged to embed more practice-informed learning into their curricula, it will also be important to think through the various challenges relating to contracts, training and timetabling, and how these staff can be supported to value both elements of their professional careers and raise the status of 'dual-professionals'.

As the policy landscape in the UK is continually evolving, we hope that, through this process, there will be greater recognition of the value of practice-informed learning, and also how it intersects with other national policy agendas such as the Industrial Strategy and local growth. As the TEF develops, incorporating more metrics and including more institutions from across the UK, it will be important for institutions to be able to articulate what good teaching looks like in their own context. This will include speaking to the role of practice-informed learning and providing an evidence base for the impact that it can have on students' learning and future outcomes.

Practice-informed learning is a key part of the complex tapestry of UK higher and further education. We hope that this report will facilitate a deepening engagement with this topic by institutions and other bodies from across the sector, helping to embed and spread practice-informed learning.

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