



North West Higher Level Skills Pathfinder Creative and Digital Sector – The Regional Context

The Creative and Digital sector in the North West is a key and growing driver of the regional economy. The North West Development Agency has identified a number of priority sectors in the region where it will target intervention and support. They are priorities because they are *“knowledge based, widely traded and have international growth potential”*. Creative and digital is one such sector. The sector footprint is vast and varied but broadly includes the audio visual industries, apparel, footwear and textiles and related businesses industry, advertising, crafts, cultural heritage, design, music and the arts and information technology in relation to creative and digital industries.

In the North West, whilst it is difficult to give definitive figures, it is estimated that approximately 140,000 people are employed in the sector in 26,000 companies and it creates some £6billion, 4.5% of regional wealth ⁽¹⁾. The sector outperforms both the regional average in terms of growth across all sectors and growth rates for the creative and digital sector in other regions. It clearly then already has a significant regional presence and this will be given further impetus by the BBC’s proposed relocation of 5 of its key departments to Salford.

A key element of the North West Higher Level Skills Pathfinder (HLSP) is the development of new higher level provision in response to employer demand. The creative and digital sector presents its own challenges in this regard, dominated as it is by small enterprises and freelancers rather than, with a few exceptions, large employers. However, working with the 4 Sector Skills Councils who cover the sector’s footprint – Creative and Cultural Skills, e-Skills UK, Skillfast-UK and Skillset – an analysis of higher level skills needs has been undertaken and is presented overleaf. Applicant institutions should refer to these needs in any proposal as they are areas of employer demand in the sector, as articulated through the Sector Skills Councils.

Institutions should also consider modes of delivery when developing provision. Given the profile of the sector and the emphasis of the Pathfinder on upskilling the current workforce rather than traditional HE entrants, it is less likely that full time courses will be appropriate. Rather, the Sector Skills Councils have expressed a preference for considering provision which might include elements of, for example:

- continuing professional development
- short courses
- modularisation
- blended learning utilising e-learning

- masterclasses
- retreats

⁽¹⁾ Source: Arts Council England, North West – “Creative Industries: helping the North West to flourish” – January 2006.

Sector Skills Councils – Key Regional Facts

Sector Skills Council	Footprint	Key Facts
Creative and Cultural Skills	advertising, crafts, cultural heritage, design, music and the arts (performing, visual and literary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 46,200 employees in the North West • 6000 freelancers • 85% of businesses in the sector employ fewer than 5 people • 38% of employees are self employed
e-Skills UK	IT professionals and IT users in other sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 58,836 employees in the IT industry in the NW • 58,035 IT professionals working in other industries • 1.9M employees who use IT in their job roles
Skillfast UK	apparel, footwear and textiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 58,000 employees in the North West including 1,000 in craft and design related roles including self employment • 80% of businesses employ fewer than 10 people
Skillset	broadcast, film, video, interactive media, photo imaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,500 audio visual establishments in the region, employing 22,000 people • Dominated by small units – 91% have workforce fewer than 5, 98% fewer than 25

Colleagues from the Sector Skills Councils are in attendance today to provide introduction and background from an employer perspective. Subsequently, queries can be directed to Peter Davies, HLSP Specialist Advisor for the Creative and Digital Sector,

Higher Level Skills Pathfinder – Creative and Digital Sector Needs

Cross Sector
 Financial management
 Research
 Health and Safety, including legislation first aid, personal safety and risk assessment
 Multiskilling
 Marketing and brand awareness
 Pitching and preparing/making presentations
 Project planning and management
 Business skills and commercial awareness
 Risk management
 Outsourcing and partnership management
 Change and growth management
 Computer aided design/ICT /use of software programmes/new and emerging technologies
 Convergence and cross platform
 Interactive technology for marketing roles
 International trade and working internationally, including sourcing abroad, importing and exporting
 Supply chain management and logistics including international trade
 Quality management and assurance systems
 Asset exploitation and management
 User awareness and understanding markets/cultural issues and languages
 Mergers and acquisitions and legal awareness including copyright, intellectual property
 Media convergence and multi channel distribution
 Writing for interactive media and electronic publishing
 Identifying and creating relevant business based IT strategy
 Creating, leading and managing IT governance
 Creating and managing processes to handle business benefits identification
 Managing change (IT and business processes)
 Managing virtual teams
 Business analysis

Media

Television:

Producers, executive & production assistants & production co-ordinators
 Script writing
 Directors
 Journalists
 Performing – acting for TV for stage actors
 Post production technical editors and commercial managers
 Hair & make up
 Broadcast engineering & technical operations

Digital Content:

Design for developers
 Project management for designers
 Interactive technology for marketing roles
 Games specific marketing and PR skills
 Platform specific iTV authoring – such as Liberate or Open TV

Games:

Software programming principles
 Human-computer-interaction and user-centred design
 Information architecture and systems architecture
 Digital rights management
 Writing for interactive media and electronic publishing
 Concept development abilities
 Users and usability, including accessibility, cultural issues and languages
 Media convergence and multi-channel distribution

Creative & Cultural

Technical role in live performance/performing arts

Creative and cultural management

Advertising :

Creative and IT skills for advertising

Craft:

E commerce

Cultural Heritage:

Cultural heritage leadership

Conservation, collection care and development and archaeology

Design:

Marketing and PR

Creative design skills

Music:

Specialist legal knowledge related to music industry

Visual/Performing/Literary

Arts

Arts education
 Public realm arts
 Fundraising

Fashion & Textiles

Garment/textile/footwear technology including:

- product development
- processes

Clothing/textile/footwear design

Clothing/textile/footwear construction principles

Technical service including:

- material properties testing
- sourcing
- product evaluation, costing
- standards

Computer aided design