



Communications and Digital Committee

Corrected oral evidence: A creative future

Tuesday 1 November 2022

2.30 pm

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Members present: Baroness Stowell of Beeston (The Chair); Baroness Bull; Baroness Buscombe; Baroness Featherstone; Lord Foster of Bath; Lord Griffiths of Burry Port; Lord Hall of Birkenhead; Baroness Harding of Winscombe; Lord Lipsey; Lord Vaizey of Didcot; The Lord Bishop of Worcester.

Evidence Session No. 10

Heard in Public

Questions 81 - 89

Witnesses

I: Dinah Caine CBE, Chair, Camden STEAM Commission; Eliza Easton, Deputy Director of Policy and Communications, Policy and Evidence Centre, Nesta; Olly Newton, Executive Director, Edge Foundation.

USE OF THE TRANSCRIPT

This is a corrected transcript of evidence taken in public and webcast on www.parliamentlive.tv.

Examination of witnesses

Dinah Caine, Eliza Easton and Olly Newton.

Q81 The Chair: This is the Communications and Digital Committee. We are continuing our inquiry into the future of creative industries. For those in the Room, we are broadcasting live and a written transcript will be taken, which will be published on our website. We have two panels today. This session is about addressing one of the biggest challenges, if not the biggest challenge, to the future of our creative industries, which is making sure that we have enough adequately and relevantly skilled people to work in the different parts of the creative industries.

Our first panel today are policy experts, and we want to explore with them what needs to change in the pre-16 education area to ensure that we have a skilled workforce for the future. We will come to the second panel later, where we will focus more on post-16 education. I ask our witnesses to briefly introduce themselves and the organisations that they represent.

Dinah Caine: I am here in my capacity as chair of Camden STEAM. I also chair the governing council of Goldsmiths. I sit on the Creative Industries Council, but I am not giving evidence with that particular hat on today.

Eliza Easton: I am a deputy director for the Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre, which was set up by the Government in the last industrial strategy and is led by Nesta. I focus on policy and run the communications and policy strategy for the PEC, as we call it.

Olly Newton: It is lovely to be with you. I am currently executive director at the Edge Foundation. I was previously a civil servant at the Department for Education for 12 years so I may bring some of that in, and I had the pleasure of working with Lord Hall and others on the House of Lords Youth Unemployment Committee last year.

Q82 Lord Foster of Bath: As you know, we are looking at the pre-16 school system. Many of us have been concerned about the decline in the number of art and creative activities in our state schools, unlike in our private schools, which still seem to value them. We argue that that has been brought about in part because of the Government's lack of enthusiasm for these areas, not least as illustrated by the absence of any arts or creative subject within the EBacc. We think that a whole variety of problems stem from that, but obviously we are interested in those that relate to the creative industries. Do you think the structure of the pre-16 school system strikes the right balance between creative and non-creative subjects?

Dinah Caine: Gosh, that is a big question. There is a lot in that and not much time. I would start by reflecting on the purpose of education pre 16. Obviously, it is for enriching those individuals and supporting businesses and employers in relation to their productivity, growth and ability to employ people. In that context, it is interesting to me that if we

are looking at primary school, from ages three to 16—you are necessarily asking questions focused solely on the creative industries—while the evidence shows that by the age of seven primary school pupils are starting to identify themselves in certain ways that relate to career roles, it is nevertheless important that we address creativity from early years on. At that age they are not necessarily looking at certain specific skills that relate to the creative industries, nor do we want them to be. We need them to be accessing creativity in different ways in and out of the curriculum. I argue for that all the way up to about 14, where things start to get more focused.

You are looking at creativity in the future and the future of work. I know the committee has had evidence from others that points to the need for all pupils to be able to access a mix, a fusion, of more interdisciplinary approaches to their learning that does not create a divide between STEM subjects and creative and arts subjects but recognises the strength of each and brings them together, and then starts to narrow and segregate as one moves up towards the age of 16. That is critical to the future of everyone's work. It is critical for the future of the creative industries because, unless we have young people accessing these subjects at every school with the ability to learn and reflect in that way, we are not going to attract the most talented people that the industries want and those who want to work in our industries to us. If we become too niche in terms of our address, we also lose the support of other critical third-party employers who would support that approach.

Particular with regard to this committee, if you look at employment, and you have heard evidence from others on this, you see that the coming together of digital and creative skills is really important at the moment, yet departmentally we separate them out. Within DDCMS we have a digital strategy and a creative strategy. We do so because digital falls within STEM, so it gets access to different support, different money and so on. Structurally, at a strategic level, that is something that the department should be attending to, looking at creativity as a horizontal skill in the same way that digital is—there are then more specific verticals for those who want to move on and into the industries—and then more broadly we need an interdisciplinary approach.

That is one solution. It is a big one. It requires looking at the whole curriculum again. It is much easier to deliver creative and interdisciplinary in primary school but much harder in secondary school, because of some of the things that you are talking about—national curricula, Progress 8, EBacc and so on.

We have been through an era where schools have become quite competitive, and where the education system has become quite competitive. There is nothing wrong with competition. However, a lot of the solutions for building more effective education and effective partnerships between schools and the industries require much greater collaboration between schools and industries, because of the make-up of SMEs and so on, if they are to partner effectively. I will stop there, because there are others on the panel, but I have other recommendations to make.

Lord Foster of Bath: Eliza, I saw you nodding vigorously to quite a lot of what Dinah was saying, so do not feel the need to repeat it; just say, “I agree”. Clearly, we are very interested in solutions, not just descriptors of the problem that you might feel that we have, so can you focus on the definitions and solutions as well?

Eliza Easton: My nodding was because Dinah painted a good picture of that broad problem. We know that the jobs of the future are at that sweet spot of creative and digital. We know that they are most likely to be jobs that require things such as digital design. We know that if you add in project and people management, you have a true recipe for jobs of the future.

Talking more specifically about the creative industries, which are about one in 16 jobs across the economy, so a big spectrum, already around 40% of businesses tell us that they have skills issues. We know that this is most common in tech, design and craft, and that they are asking for knowledge of specific software problems and website design, and other design areas, as well as those softer skills—art, advertising, sales—and the need to build relationships. That is the skills problem that we are looking at now, not even anticipating how that is likely to develop and grow and how it has probably grown already since those numbers were taken as a result of Brexit and Covid.

In the English school system, in theory, the curriculum covers several areas that map well on to some of the skills that we will need in the future. The problem is much bigger than just the EBacc or even the up-to-date school curriculum. As outlined by CP Snow in the 1950s and by other authors back to the 19th century, there are two cultures: sciences and arts. However, there are structural risks in how schools work at the moment, one being that academies do not have to follow the curriculum. Therefore, it is possible to have an excellent academy that does not offer these subjects. That is a concern. I do not think that you should be able to have an exceptional-rated school that does not offer at least a range of creative subjects. My hope and understanding is that those academies that do not offer any of the arts—and some may offer a range—are few.

I am very nervous about this continued societal pressure, not least from university and college departments, for people to pick clusters of subjects around the academic subject which they will go on to study. Policymakers have potentially a huge lever in making the case that universities and colleges must understand that the jobs you will go to after university and college will ask for that breadth of skills.

I would like to point to one more concern, which is around DT GCSE. Looking at the biggest skills gaps across the economy, in such things as green engineering, and in the creative industry in things such as design, they map so closely on to what design and technology could teach. It is mad to me that the number has fallen since 2000 by 80%. It was already falling before that. We are now down to about 78,000 students studying it every year. When a subject maps so closely to cross-economy skills, we must ask ourselves what is going on. That is a good place to

start thinking about whether the school system can provide the skills that we need for today, let alone tomorrow.

Olly Newton: To build on those two excellent contributions, Dinah was making the point about primary schools being very holistic. I characterise it as a bit of a sandwich, so if that is true of primary, then in apprenticeships, the official system measures not just knowledge but skills and behaviours as well, and in the university sector, we are increasingly seeing things such as the London Interdisciplinary School focusing on interdisciplinary education. This secondary phase that we are talking about today is characterised by the EBacc, by Progress 8, by these significant falls in creative subjects, and in design and technology, which I would include in that same bucket.

In terms of solutions, a two-phase approach might be appropriate, working with the grain of the current system to think about existing performance measures and how we can incorporate creative and technical opportunities into them, because we are in a position of “can we save some of these subjects in the next few years?” You might want to think more radically beyond that, about whether we could get out of this mindset of a competition between subjects and think more about creating Renaissance people who have a breadth of skills, about a holistic baccalaureate, building on the international baccalaureate and other examples that we can talk about from here.

Also, as well as these skills being ideal for the creative industries themselves, creativity as a whole is the one skill that comes out again and again when we look at research internationally about what young people are going to need, in financial services, in any industry. We cannot go wrong by teaching more creativity. It is what everyone is crying out for.

I will just finish this section on a positive. A school near me in Doncaster, XP school, is trying to bring that interdisciplinary element into secondary education. It is playing by the rules and following Progress 8 but, instead of teaching individual subjects separately, it teaches through expeditions that bring together a range of subjects. Young people work on a real question from the outside world.

One of its recent projects was called “Should I Stay or Should I Go?” It looked at migration into Doncaster, which was a Brexit-voting town. The students met families and got to know their stories, looking at history and recent current affairs, and English as a second language. They built and made a beautiful film, which is on YouTube, called “Should I Stay or Should I Go?” It was their love-letter to the migrants of Doncaster, saying, “You’re welcome here.” They showed it to their parents at a local cinema, and there were parents saying, “I’ve thought this about migrants all my life, and this has really changed my views.” The students have this as a product that they can show to future employers. They are learning the history, they are learning the English, they are getting their GCSEs, and doing it in a compassionate way which helps to look at a real-life problem that excites them and lets them show off their creativity.

Lord Foster of Bath: That is very helpful and picks up some of the arguments that former Secretary of State Ken Baker, now Lord Baker, has been making in relation to his colleges.

I absolutely get the second, but in relation to your short-term fix, are you implying that the requirement is for Ofsted to make judgments on schools that cover these things and that this alone would stimulate schools to start doing more in these areas?

Olly Newton: I advocate a change to the way that Progress 8 is measured in the short term. Yes, Ofsted would look at that, but also a structural change to—I hate the term—the buckets of Progress 8, to ensure that creative and technical subjects are properly recommended.

Q83 **Baroness Harding of Winscombe:** I have a pedantic question, but I want to ensure that I understand what each of you are talking about, and what Olly means by “teaching creativity”. We were talking about this before you came in. I worry that we conflate creativity with arts subjects whereas they are quite different. I want to be clear about what you meant.

Olly Newton: I would like both: I would like to see more creative subjects being taught and more creativity within the teaching of other subjects. I would not advocate a separate hour a week for a creativity lesson, which is divorced from everything else. That is absolutely the wrong way to go and would put us back. I would advocate teaching other core subjects, such as science and history, in a way that fosters creativity.

One small example of that, to which the Royal Society pointed recently, is that the amount of the science curriculum and the pressure on GCSEs has pushed out practicals. You can get better GCSE results if you learn the results of the practical and repeat them in the exam, but then you will go on to become a scientist who has never used a Bunsen burner. That is one example of the Royal Society advocating an increase in the amount of practical education. That is teaching more creativity and technical skills within a core subject.

Baroness Harding of Winscombe: When you say, “the creative subjects”, do you mean what I might call the arts subjects?

Olly Newton: Absolutely, I do.

Dinah Caine: I could link that to the practical examples that Lord Foster was talking about. I would like to point to work at Camden STEAM, which I chair. It links to the question, because maths and engineering, for example, are very creative subjects. All these things are creative, but the point we were all making earlier was that a much more interdisciplinary approach is needed. To enable that, you both need pupils at school to take creative subjects and need the inflection that comes from understanding and engaging with cross-curricular teams who are looking at project-based work which brings out and affirms what they are learning and has some real-world application.

We have discussed creative education in policy terms for years but, at Camden, the decision was made to start to make practical progress on the needs of employers within that area. It brings together everybody across that spectrum, from Google and Meta to Roundhouse, Crick and Wellcome, and their articulation of what they want, which we referred to earlier. It then looks at how to make that work and sing, both within the constraints of the current curriculums and out of them.

Olly has just been talking about examples, but there are now concrete examples of how we have worked with 30 schools—all of the secondaries and half of the primaries. We have 150 STEAM ambassadors who go into schools from employers, and we have 50 employers. We have worked on a number of projects. I can continue with those examples further in writing.

The Chair: You can follow up in writing, or feed them in as we progress.

Q84 **Baroness Bull:** I now go to Eliza, and I am very much building on Baroness Harding's question. She asked half of it. You all argued very effectively for the importance of creativity in the student experience and across the broad span of industries. Eliza, from your work in the Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre, help us to understand if there is a special relationship between arts subjects and the development of creativity in young people. That is the bit we want to get down to and I think you can help us from your policy and evidence work.

Eliza Easton: I like to think about it through the definition of the creative industries. If you are a total nerd like me, that is very interesting, because it comes down to these tests of creativity. In essence, it was originally defined in relation to intellectual property. It is all about creating something brand new, for the first time. Also, every time you do it, you will be doing something different. If you are a designer, musician or actor, every time you set out to create something it is brand new.

Let us think about school subjects. Certainly maths can be wildly creative. We know that in higher education—in fact, I have spoken to some maths professors at Oxford about this—they worry that creative maths is not being taught in schools, where students are learning to do things almost by rote, the same way each time. Once you get to a certain level, maths is massively creative, but the creative subjects are always like that. If you are studying art and design, drama or design technology at school, part of it is, in essence, coming up with new intellectual properties. That will be great for your confidence if you want to go on to the creative industries and do the same thing again.

There is a special relationship, and it exists with something like creative writing as well, if you are doing that at school. It should exist for all sorts of essay-writing, but we sometimes tend towards a system in which there are lots of check boxes and people are told to write a certain way. I feel very protective of these moments, as much as I am making it sound far more boring than it is, in which children get to develop their own intellectual property. That is really important.

Baroness Bull: Do you think that learning those skills within arts subjects develops a way of thinking that spills over into other subjects?

Eliza Easton: Yes, it develops that exactly and a confidence. I have to be careful here, but we can see that in some international comparisons. Different Governments around the world have reintroduced higher levels of creative subjects, in an attempt to bring them in not just to their creative industries but across the board. People look to the UK as somewhere where that confidence and entrepreneurial spirit has creative subjects at its core.

This is a minor point on drama. Drama is often not spoken about, because its skills do not map as clearly as design's, say, into huge national skills gaps. But I would not be able to do this if I had not done a drama GCSE, and I am sure lots of people feel like that. It was essential for me to be able to put on a mask that gives me enough confidence to have conversations with people who I do not know particularly well. We sometimes try to map skills very specifically, but putting time in the curriculum for people to explore those things is important, especially as we know that the creative industries are hyper-networked and based massively on being able to sell your stuff, again and again, to lots of different people in lots of different companies. It is worth looking individually at each subject and what it provides, and I do not want to miss out drama.

Olly Newton: May I add one point to Eliza's excellent answer? Another element that is strong in the creative subjects, but not elsewhere, is doing repeated drafts of something until you get to a final product. It is not just doing your homework, getting it ticked and putting it in the bin, but doing a starter sketch for design technology, or doing the first draft of your play script, and then working it through. We all use that skill in our work, every day.

Q85 **The Lord Bishop of Worcester:** Thank you for being with us and for some stimulating answers. Dinah, you began by saying that education should be about enriching individuals and you went on to discuss your hope that education always remains that. I always think that education should be a bit like friendship: you enter into it for its own sake, not for what you might get out of it. Nevertheless, we have to concentrate on what sort of skills will be necessary. It reminds me of what Eliza was saying about maths professors at Oxford. In a different life I taught chemistry, which we used to teach according to the Nuffield approach, which was all about creativity. I think we have gone backwards; there is much more learning by rote nowadays and less creativity in STEM subjects.

I want to press you and go a bit deeper into the way in which we might change things. One of the emphases, as has been suggested by previous parliamentary reports and stakeholders, is that we are overacademic in our approach to education nowadays. We learn about those going on to college and university, but 60% or so of the population will not go on to university and those people need to develop skills in a way that is useful to the creative industries. I am struck by the University of Plymouth's

evidence of the “enormous gap” there is between the skills requirements of their courses and the structure of learning in primary and secondary schools. You have mentioned some possible ways forward—I know the Edge Foundation talks about project-based learning—but how can they be expanded in a way that helps people to develop as responsible citizens, as well as giving them the skills for university or work? That is a very broad question. Since we are on the Edge Foundation, I will start with Olly.

Olly Newton: I have a few reflections on that. Thank you for the question, Lord Bishop. We sometimes worry about overemphasising preparation for work, but it is important to think about the skills we are talking about. Actually, we want those skills in our partners, families and neighbours—good communication and good problem-solving. It is important to keep an eye on that that, but they are not necessarily two different things.

Your point about an overemphasis on academic education is right. It is not unique to us internationally, but it is certainly a challenge here. Interestingly—and I apologise for making another nerdy point—most countries might call the earlier stage of education general education, rather than academic. Here we call it academic, then the natural inclination is to continue with your academic study and anything else is not the default option. We might want to give a really strong general education for young people then develop a mix of academic and vocational beyond that.

We would certainly love to see more opportunities for those vocational, technical, creative subjects to come further forward in the curriculum—things like the young apprenticeships that used to exist and which were incredibly popular as an opportunity for 14 to 16 year-olds to have a taster of a creative industry or a technical subject so that they might then go on to compete for an apprenticeship at 16, say. We would love to see that.

A danger that is coming which I worry about—this moves into your next session on post-16—is the idea that people need to make a binary choice at 16 between wholly academic and wholly technical. We would certainly like to see things like strong BTECs and strong stand-alone qualifications continue so that, in examples like the university technical colleges that Lord Foster mentioned, young people will continue to be able to blend those and be holistic and develop those wider skills, rather than making a binary choice between being wholly academic and wholly vocational.

Eliza Easton: Something we hear about a lot is the need for people in schools to spend time in creative businesses. That, as Dinah Caine touched on, is a hugely important approach that introduces individual students not only to what we call the superstar creative jobs—which after all are jobs where a very few people make almost all the money—but to the broad range of creative jobs behind them. For every huge celebrity writer or singer, you have all the people working in the music or publishing industry behind them.

One issue with that approach, as creative industries have told us when we have taken evidence, is that a huge amount is being asked of them. They are asked to have school trips come to visit and to give T-level experience or apprenticeship and university work experience. At the moment there is such a broad range that they feel, even if they are trying to follow what the Government want them to do, they do not know where to put their energy to support schools, colleges or universities to provide the people with the skills that they need. I suggest the DfE needs to co-ordinate better what it is asking for from businesses and then to direct schools, colleges and apprenticeship providers to the businesses most able to help.

When it comes to the holistic importance of the arts, another sadness to me when it comes to schools is the huge decline in arts officers at local government level around the country. They were there to provide a connection between, on the one hand, everything that was happening culturally and local museums, galleries and theatres, and, on the other hand, schools, giving people a real experience of what it would be like to work in those businesses and, more importantly, building lifelong connections that had benefits for community cohesion, well-being and all sorts of other things. There are still arts officers because some local governments have really tried to protect them, but having people whose job it is to match local schools up with all the things happening in the area is something that has been lost and it would be great to see more of that being brought back.

Dinah Caine: I am old enough to regret that the Tomlinson review was never enacted. It would have brought vocational and academic subjects together in one place. We as a country tend to change all the time: we had the 14-to-19 diplomas, then we changed them to T-levels, and on we go. There is something in policy terms about consistency and clarity for schools and employers, but that is not how we manage skills in this country at the moment. At some point, we need cross-party agreement on that merry-go-round stopping in order that we can all understand how to work on driving forward exactly what we are talking about.

Having said that, in violent agreement with my colleagues, I add careers information, advice and guidance to the list; that is critical. Specifically when it comes to the creative industries, we are still not as good as we should be about delivering and supporting that. A great deal of work needs to go into that from not only the industry's point of view but the Government's.

In policy terms around skills, there is a move towards understanding life through a prism of what I would call still-20th-century employment practices, which means large companies that employ people for a long period of time. The world has moved fantastically quickly and gathers ever more pace. It is now about portfolio working. The creative industries are trailblazers in relation to that and we should be learning lessons from them, rather than seeing them as atypical outliers and therefore not entitled to access to public investment and support in the way that they should be.

I am saying that because there is often a clash between policy and the ability of the industries to deliver on some of these things because of the make-up of microenterprises, freelancing and so on. Apprenticeships are a fantastic example: we have lobbied for five years and finally have the agreement for flexible movement between companies, and I know that consideration is now being given to bigger companies being able to give more of theirs to smaller companies.

The T-levels are another example. They are an excellent idea that could afford pupils access to practical learning within schools but require 45-day work experience placements with one employer, which is almost impossible for many employers in these industries to offer. Instead of having to agree a horizontal policy that fits certain kinds of industries—the model is less service industries and more manufacturing—there needs to be greater understanding of flexibility and greater collaboration on the ground. For example, the Arts Council is investing in creative collaboratives. I believe Baroness Bull will be leading the task force on the cultural education plan. Is that right?

Baroness Bull: Leading the expert advisory panel.

Dinah Caine: Sorry, the expert advisory panel—always expert. These are opportunities for us to start to look at how collaboration, rather than competition, is going to be necessary. You have asked for practical examples of those collaborations. It is a bit dull to hear someone blabbing on about them, but we shall give you some examples of those practical collaborations that might be useful for you to consider when you are reflecting on your evidence.

Olly Newton: To add to Eliza's excellent point on arts officers, that is a great example of us losing the connective tissue out of this area. The other two that I would point to are education business partnerships, which did that work, and Connexions services, where, if the funding had gone to schools, it would have been over £100,000 per secondary school. That funding did not make it to schools and yet they still have to deliver their careers duties.

Q86

Lord Griffiths of Burry Port: First, how exciting it is to have one of these meetings devoted to education. Secondly, it is brilliant to hear words such as collaboration, interdisciplinarity and so on. It makes it even better to have a mention of the greatly regretted Tomlinson report. Having said that, I make a plea to rescue rote. We have outsourced memory to our computers, but I know from bringing up three children that it was habit formation that represented a bedrock and gave them a sense of who and where they were and what needed to be done without having to work it out as they went along. I have always believed there is a need to have, somewhere in the mix, a proper valuation—not replacing creativity by rote learning, but striking a balance. Having a good knowledge of grammar means that, as well as learning to buy a ticket for the theatre in French, you know what your sentence is doing when you ask for it. Does that resonate with you too? It is a plea on my part.

Olly Newton: Every teacher needs a range of tools in their tool bag. Rote learning certainly works for some things. I am definitely not a proponent of the idea that if we all have iPhones then we do not need to have knowledge in our heads. We should have a balance of knowledge, skills and behaviours, which is the tripartite that comes out of the OECD's work and out of PISA. It is telling that work is going on at the moment with our colleague Professor Bill Lucas, who heads the Centre for Real-World Learning and is one of the leading world experts on creativity. They have developed a creative measure for PISA, but England is one of the only countries in the world not to take it up. So I think you are right that we need a balance; it is not one or the other.

Eliza Easton: I completely agree. Added to that we see things like project management as especially essential when it comes to creative skills. You can imagine why that is. Freelancers might be wildly creative, but often need that project management head to get things over the line. All the evidence indicates that it is about that combination of technical and learned skills, mixed with creativity. That is why it is useful to stop separating the arts and other subjects, because so much happens at the intersection, rather than by pushing people one way or the other.

Lord Griffiths of Burry Port: I read the novels of CP Snow as they were being written.

Dinah Caine: I was going to agree about balance and throw in entrepreneurship, although I know it is not rote. We have not focused on it, but our thinking about the curriculum needs to focus on entrepreneurship and people's ability to self-manage. They will be more important in an economy moving to start-ups, in which people will have to manage themselves and their portfolio careers, as the fourth industrial revolution changes all our lives.

Q87 **Lord Hall of Birkenhead:** I agree with that important point. I want just to go back to what you have all been saying, very eloquently and clearly, but from the lens of a young person. Olly and I were on a Select Committee last year and one of the many conclusions it came to was that there is a real issue with careers education in schools. Some of the data points to that: two-thirds of people do not feel they are getting the information they need to plot out their careers; and something like 1% listed schools' careers guidance as the main reason behind their choice for further education or training, which is extraordinary. Dinah, you mentioned careers education, but could you unpack more of that and what would be useful to help guide young people towards a career in the creative industries? At the very beginning, you said that careers education should begin much earlier and that, aged seven, children are thinking about what career they might go into. Can you give us your thoughts?

Dinah Caine: I think you are expecting me to answer that from the prism of the creative industries' relationship. Having said that, the Gatsby benchmarks, which Olly can no doubt illuminate further on, are critical. They are a foundation for all schools and for all of us to address.

Lord Sainsbury led that work. They form a framework for all industries, employers and schools, and provide something that is common.

Specifically, the potential of the creative industries and now their huge opportunities are misunderstood. They are not known about and—we have often talked about this—communicated as much as they should be. That is partly because 13 subsectors are coming together, so there is an issue around collaboration. That work is going on, but it needs to be turbocharged and invested in far more.

Having said that, of course everybody can read that information online and so on, but making sense of it goes back to my point about collaboration and implementation locally. The experience of Camden STEAM is of getting in local employers and supporting schools in a way that makes sense to schools and enables them to work together at project level. In primary schools, it is about talking about roles by introducing them through project-based work. As pupils get older, they start to talk in a more detailed way about the roles that go into kids' projects. As they go further, talking about those roles is critical, as is work experience. The further up you go, the more important work experience becomes.

During the pandemic, we worked with Google and others in Camden at developing virtual work experience. While that is not as effective as actually going in, it definitely improved pupils' and teachers' knowledge of the creative industries, from something like 20% to 70%. There is something about using technology more imaginatively, alongside the foot-in-the-door work-based support, that is critical.

We also do summer schools in Camden. We get employers to run particular week-long challenges with the most deprived school students. Part of that is the project again, but a lot of it is about careers information. I see it needing a multilayered response, at the very top of which there needs to be fantastic market intelligence, labour market information and future-facing information. That is required of any careers advice and guidance, which we need to get a lot better at in policy terms, across the economy.

Lord Hall of Birkenhead: Is there a bias towards large companies in what you are outlining? One of the conclusions the committee's work came to last year is that this is fine for a very large company, which can afford to spend time sending people out and bringing in T-level people for work experience. But it is very hard for what is, in many respects, the base of creative industries—very small micro businesses. They could be inspiring, but they do not have the time.

Dinah Caine: This is why there needs to be brokerage and something that helps to co-ordinate and effect that collaboration for these industries. Camden STEAM is one example, the creativity collaboratives are potentially another and there will be others. Time and again, those examples show real impact in our understanding and development of these industries. If you leave it to myriad small employers and schools, that connection will not happen at scale and it will not deliver the impact

that we need to make sure that the creative industries and—going back to where we started—the whole economy grows.

Eliza Easton: The whole skills system is, in essence, built as if freelancers do not exist. I would go that far. That is a huge problem from migration through to higher education and right across the board. We hear from people who run businesses, even sizeable businesses, asking if they should be doing T-levels, school trips, apprenticeships and work placements: “What do you want from us?” This is clearly a challenge on the ground.

I have some sympathy with careers advisers. The government statistics around creative industries are incredibly outdated, at the moment, in the kinds of jobs they highlight. This is a fast-moving sector, especially the tech side, which is most significant in terms of its economics and the number of employees. I have sympathy with people who are trying to wrap their heads around a sector that has changed so quickly.

One thing that needs to be invested in, which is linked to the work of the Unit for Future Skills, is real-time mapping, using job adverts to give people a sense of how many jobs are out there and what they are called. We are miles away from that at the moment. We do not even have an industry code for computer games, so policymakers are some way from being able to provide expertise and guidance.

One thing that sounds separate from this discussion but is critical is a freelancer test that skills policies would have to think about. Whether it works for freelancers, it could start to get some of this to change. Quite a lot of departments and arm’s-length bodies will also have to start collecting hard-to-get freelance data. I remember Lord Vaizey and I tried to get the Arts Council to collect some of that data, a long time ago. We realised that the Arts Council’s diversity data did not include freelancers, who were about half the people working for the organisation at that time.

This stuff is challenging and it is more expensive, but that is the way the economy is going. If we as a country want any policies that recognise the skills gaps in the economy and how to fill them, we will have to start really thinking about how better to understand freelancers.

Lord Hall of Birkenhead: I completely agree about teaching what it means and how you can be a freelancer. It is exactly like entrepreneurship. I completely agree with you.

Olly, the Edge Foundation has called for better-embedded careers advice in the curriculum and the Gatsby benchmarks being statutory rather than advisory.

Olly Newton: The Gatsby benchmarks take us a long way forward, but the challenge is in the delivery. At the moment, delivery is quite patchy. To give you one example, all schools need to have a careers leader. That could be someone whose full-time role is as a careers leader, which is wonderful, or it could be the geography or PE teacher’s Wednesday afternoon job, which is just not acceptable.

Lord Hall of Birkenhead: What about the creative industries?

Olly Newton: Every school should have the funding given to them to have a full-time careers leader to make the connections with small businesses that Dinah has talked to about so eloquently—doubly so with freelancers because they are going to need extra hand holding and support. For our money, the key Gatsby benchmark is benchmark 4, which is about getting careers into the curriculum. If we can crack that one, then we really will have made a difference.

To give you one example from a school in Sheffield where I was enterprise adviser, we were teaching the classic *Inspector Calls* in English. Rather than doing that by reading it in class, they worked with the drama department and local theatre makers to recreate scenes from it, and they worked with the legal department at the local university to understand the legal case. That is very much the point that Dinah has made: it is about drip-feeding and sneaking in careers advice about the creative industries and professional occupations, not just through an assembly but through those kinds of elements.

On the point about the freelancer test, I love that idea but there are ways in which we can continue to try to work as efficiently as possible while understanding that people have very little time. I shall give you two examples of that. One is teacher externships, a programme that we run at Edge where teachers go on work experience rather than students. Teachers spent two days with an organisation and then use that to teach an element of the curriculum. Because it is in their lesson plans, it will be used year after year, so that recognises that they do not have a lot of time.

The other good one is real project briefs. All our freelancers work to briefs. If they can provide those to some of the teachers and students can have a go at those then—who knows?—they might get some good intellectual property, to speak to Eliza's point, but it is also quite an efficient way to bring something to life without having to spend hours and hours of extra time on it.

Q88 **Lord Foster of Bath:** This is a question to ask you to do something subsequently. On the whole issue of the inadequacy of workforce data with relation to the creative industries, it would be helpful if each of you could write a note of your thoughts—or perhaps just ask Lord Vaizey to write it for you.

Eliza Easton: It is worth saying that a lot of it is an international data problem. It is about how these huge global systems work to change industry codes over time. The DCMS and the UK have actually been pushing; it is just slow.

Lord Foster of Bath: We can look elsewhere, and of course we will, but the more direct evidence that we have from witnesses, the more likely we are to be able to make use of it in the report.

Dinah Caine: On that, and as a bridge to your next session, one live example over the last couple of years has been the way in which that

lack of data and understanding of it around the creative industries—because of the way that the DfE collects it—has impacted on investment in, and concern around, creative courses in higher education. I leave it to other colleagues to address that in your next session, but it certainly would help to illuminate that point.

Lord Vaizey of Didcot: Really this is a comment, which is probably deeply unhelpful at the end of the session. It all stems from the leadership in government taking these things seriously. We still have too many politicians who will do rent-a-quotes slagging off media studies, not understanding their importance. I was struck when our previous Prime Minister Liz Truss made that famous speech at the party conference about cranes building buildings; she did not make the point that the largest film studio in Europe was being built on the doorstep of the Conservative Party conference, and I do not think a single Tory Cabinet Minister visited that set—one of the biggest industrial investments in Britain's second city. It is astonishing how little attention is paid to the creative industries by politicians. That is where the sea change has to start.

Eliza Easton: I have also noted that, when policy leaders want to talk about the creative industries, they are ridiculed for it. We all remember the Peppa Pig debacle.

Lord Vaizey of Didcot: I defended Boris on that.

Eliza Easton: My big fear was, "What if no one can talk about animation any more?", because it was thought so crazy to talk about this huge IP that Britain had sold. I also remember when policy advisers went to the new Bond film—this huge economic, social, cultural soft-power moment. Again, the front pages of the newspapers, themselves part of the creative industries, said, "Why are they not doing the proper work when all of this is happening?" I have sympathy when people talk about it only overseas rather than domestically, because when some politicians have spoken about it domestically, they have been ridiculed. I wish they could have then repeatedly come back and said, "No, you need to have a look at the numbers we are talking about". The story with Peppa Pig is that the UK sold it too early, not that it is not a massively important global IP. The numbers are just astonishing. Sorry, that is off topic.

Lord Vaizey of Didcot: I—

The Chair: We must be brief because we are running out of time.

Lord Vaizey of Didcot: This is very interesting, Chair.

The Chair: I know, but we are running out of time, and we have another session.

Dinah Caine: Any senior politicians taking a sector seriously makes an enormous difference. Perhaps, to throw the question back, it would be interesting for you as politicians, with all your wisdom, to reflect on that issue in your recommendations. How can we work to improve the situation?

The Chair: That is a fair challenge, and one on which we will certainly

reflect. It is also important that we draw a distinction between people's comments on media studies courses and some of the very successful creative businesses. The two things do not necessarily complement each other.

Baroness Bull: Lord Vaizey has sort of led on to what I am going to talk about, but first I have to put one thing in your heads about the Gatsby benchmarks. I think they are excellent but, if you search for the word, the word "creative" is not there and there is a distinct prioritisation of STEM subjects. I know you do not have time to answer that but please, if we are pushing for them to be statutory, can we look at the wording?

Dinah Caine: That is a really good point.

Baroness Bull: It is really important, and I wanted to get it on the record.

Olly Newton: We agree.

Dinah Caine: I totally agree.

Q89 **Baroness Bull:** My actual question is about the perceived and the actual status of arts in education, or the subjects within that. You have talked convincingly about the benefits to young people of arts subjects and of creativity, and many of us around this table would be with you on that, but we have also touched on the many ways in which the value of creative subjects is constantly undermined: they are not in the EBacc, they are not mentioned in careers guidance, as I have just mentioned, and we frequently have them downgraded to low value in ministerial fiats, speeches and so on. What needs to change in the ways in which we measure the value in these subjects, in their attainment and in the ways that schools teach them so that parents and students are convinced of the value of creative subjects, and we do not still have people creating the false dichotomy between "soft" creative subjects and the more "hard-edged"—that is, money-earning—subjects?

Eliza, could you start on this? You have talked a bit about Ofsted and what it could or could not do. We know it does deep dives. Is there more that we can learn from those deep dives about what could deliver systemic change across all schools? What would you like to see Ofsted do?

Eliza Easton: Going back to my previous point, the reason to mention the Peppa Pig and Bond stuff is that if these big, huge-earning IPs are being ridiculed then you cannot blame parents for thinking these are not good areas for their children to go into.

Baroness Bull: To be fair, I do not think Aardvark gets the same treatment. I think Peppa Pig was in a specific context.

Eliza Easton: That is true but, more broadly, I have definitely been aware that in general politicians want to put on a hard hat or go and open the markets but are more nervous about being seen to be doing something fun.

I also understand parents' concerns, given the genuine reality that, in the top, starry jobs, fewer and fewer people globally—this is a result of globalisation and the fact that we are increasingly watching the same things around the world—are earning more of the money. That makes it essential that careers advice focuses on the vast range of jobs and does not always play on the starriest roles. It should provide more honest accounts of the plethora of options that are available to people.

I am very nervous about the pressure that HE especially—less so FE—puts on individuals to study a cluster of subjects around the academic subject that they go on to do. If there is basically a market failure at the point of HE, where they are suddenly being encouraged to do something that does not set them up with the skills they will need after that and does not encourage them to think in more diverse ways, then I do not blame parents or teachers for saying, as we were told, "If you're doing one science, it's best to study all other sciences". That is what will appeal most to the department. If you are studying one humanities subject, it is best to do that cluster.

That would be my focus. I would really think about why parents and teachers are saying this. Some of it is about the mood music, but a lot of it is genuine concern about what students will be able to apply for, and until higher education institutions start recognising that they want people with a greater breadth of skills and putting that into place, it will be more difficult to make that case.

Baroness Bull: So you think it is the gateways into higher education that are having an impact, not so much the future employment question.

Eliza Easton: That is certainly having a major impact, because many people choose subjects based on what is going to get them into university, especially because of a lack of careers guidance. They do not know what career they will have, so they are just looking at the best subjects they can do in order to get them on to that next stage. I cannot blame them, the parents or the school for that.

Baroness Bull: Olly, what about Ofsted? It tends to say when the school is doing really well in the arts, but it will not say when it is doing really badly, so there may not be an incentive for schools to up their levels.

Olly Newton: That is a really important point. The analogy here is the way apprenticeships have been seen by parents. When I was in the DfE we had a large campaign about apprenticeships. Two things started to persuade parents that apprenticeships might be good for their children. One was the breadth of subjects they were offered in. With apprenticeships, the perception is that they are just for manufacturing, and seeing financial services and digital gaming started to change people's minds. To speak to Eliza's point, the other thing that really changed people's minds was the creation of degree apprenticeships—the idea that an apprenticeship did not have to prevent you from also going to higher education and getting a degree. There is a real pull factor up to show those elements coming through.

Another element I wanted to touch on is the way the statistics tend to be calculated. Particularly at this stage, but also through into further and higher education, they tend to be on earnings afterwards, and until we move on from that debate to careers satisfaction and doing a subject that unlocks something that you want to do, the creative subjects will always fall behind some of the other subjects. So it is really important that we start to think about how we can use more destination measures, but also improve the data so that it is qualitative and not based just on income.

Baroness Bull: We talked a bit about that last week, too, with the use of LEO data.

Dinah Caine: If parents understand that creative subjects and creativity, which we discussed at the start, are key to their children's employment not just in the creative industries but in the wider economy and in their futures, they will place more value on them. At the moment, we tend not to describe the opportunities for them in these industries, or describe those opportunities' importance in that wider picture. It seems to me that there is a virtuous circle to be connected there. Secondly, we need to get much better at going back to the data and statistics and tracking and understanding where people move on to.

I am not quite sure I understand Eliza's point about higher education, I have to say. I think she is saying that, in its broader sense, if higher education institutions like Oxford and Cambridge do not recognise and welcome these subjects on entry, that is a problem. There was a wonderful report from the Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre on the value of creative higher education and its importance to the creative and other industries which was produced and developed as part of a response to Augar and the misunderstanding of the inadequate data that currently exists about our industries and their interface with training and education delivery.

A lot of top-level work needs to be done. You are hearing "interdisciplinary data, data, data", but it is critical to do, because until we can understand ourselves better and other people understand us better, how can we expect parents to understand us? That goes back to Lord Vaizey's point about everybody, cross-party, really focusing on the importance of these industries and the importance of skills and education, not just to them but to our future economy, our future nation.

The Chair: Thank you very much. That is a good point on which to conclude. I thank all three of you very much, not just for your time but for the enthusiasm and energy that you have shown today. It been heartening to witness. There is a lot that you have given us. It has been quite interesting to hear Eliza's example of learning drama as a way of giving people confidence. That is quite a good pitch. You also talked about the importance of freelancing and the creative industries being at the forefront of a modern working world. There is almost a need for us not to fear freelancing, and therefore to try to ignore it, as part of the future, rather than embrace it and to understand how we can properly reflect that in policy-making. That is important. Thank you very much

indeed. We are very grateful to all three of you.