

A Review of Art and Design Education in Norfolk's Secondary Sector

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A Review of Art and Design Education in Norfolk's Secondary Sector

- Commissioned by Norwich University of the Arts, through the outreach and recruitment department
- Aim to understand the challenges currently facing schools and importantly how the NUA might actively support creative education regionally
- 62 teachers from 37 schools (71% Norfolk's secondary sector) participated in the research

Research focus

- Art & Design and Design and Technology, media where offered
- KS 3 provision and understanding the factors affecting KS4 choices and provision
- In retrospect it would have been useful to also include KS2
- NUA's contact largely with KS5 and FE to date

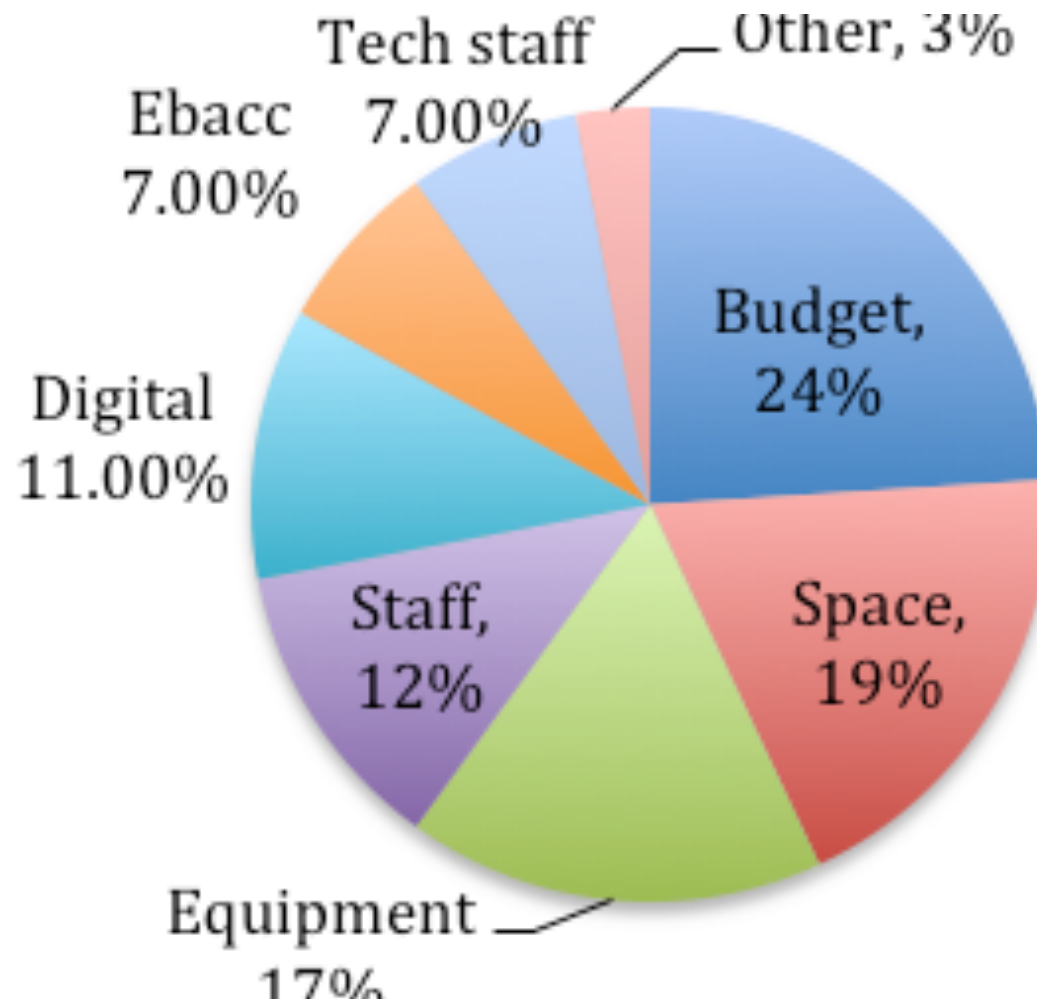
Norfolk – underlying challenges

- 5 LAs in the worst 20% in England for social mobility, 4 rank in the worst 10% and Norwich itself the 2nd worst in the country
- In the lowest 20% of LAs for KS2 attainment in literacy and maths
- Poor cultural infrastructure exacerbated by rural spread /coastal towns and limited public transport
- Teachers reported isolation, low aspirations and lack of cultural diversity

Overview

- The research showed multiple factors influencing fair and accessible opportunities to study art and design and D&T within statutory education.
- These fall within two interrelated areas those relating to **attainment/accountability** and those relating to **perceptions of the value of art and design subjects**.
- Schools (& Government) avow to providing a broad and balanced curriculum but how this is played out varies immensely

Main challenges reported by schools



Main challenges reported by schools

- Funding was the most cited challenge, with the main effect being on renewal and purchase of equipment - from hand tools to software
- Space for teaching, display and storage was the second most cited challenge.
- Issues with staffing included lack of specialist staff, lack of support staff and recruitment

Erosion of infrastructure

- 50% of schools reported a drop in departmental funding since 2010
- 40% of schools reported a decrease in staffing in either Art & Design or D&T or both since 2010
- 26% of schools reported a decrease in space
- Only 32% schools have access to exhibition space

Some comments behind the figures

- “Number of GCSEs taught expanded, but darkroom no longer operational due to lack of funding”
- “Now an all through school with art being taught at primary level but with no extra staff”
- “60% budget cut means students have to purchase materials”
- “Non-specialists delivering technology which means some projects need to be 'simplified' for the teacher”
- “Resource heavy projects such as sculpture and printing cut due to lack of funding”

KS3 pressures since 2010

- Drop in attainment on entry to Yr 7 reported by 72% respondents
- Many children entering Yr 7 with negative attitude towards art as a subject “*worth doing*”
- 37% teachers reported a decrease in KS3 teaching time since 2010
- High achieving students taken out, for example, for additional foreign language lessons

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KS3 pressures since 2010

- Students taken out for Maths & English catch up - *“often those who are disadvantaged and may be less likely to have access to wider learning and cultural opportunities outside school”* NUT Exam Factories, 2015
- Attainment 8 targets set by KS2 Maths & English, creating an unrealistic bar and increasing lack of confidence in art and design, further alienating pupils from the subject

Factors effecting KS4 choice – no. of option blocks in which subjects offered

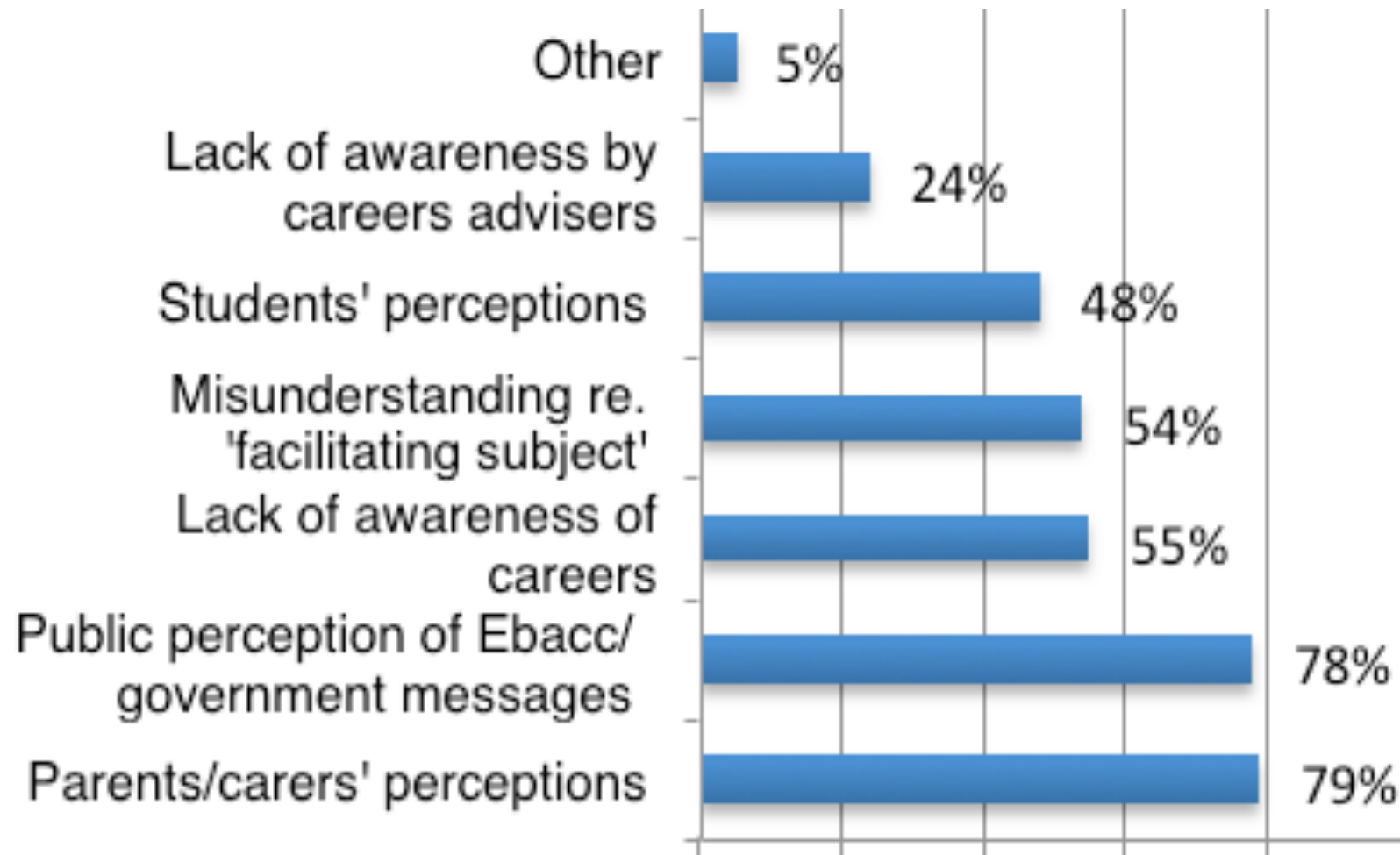
D&T

- 60% of schools reported decline in option blocks
- 56% of schools reported course closures

A&D

- 57% of schools reported decline
- 12% of schools reported KS4 course closures
- 31% reported increase in courses offered
- Further reductions predicted in response to Attainment 8 and Progress 8

Factors influencing KS4 choices



Factors influencing KS4 choices

- D&T seen as “blue collar”, or art as not leading to viable career
- Mis- perception of the importance of the Ebacc as a qualification in its own right rather than a schools’ accountability measure
- Findings support Peter Bazalgette’s recommendations in his recent report for “ *an attraction strategy to excite and inform young people and those who influence them about creative careers*”

Pressures on KS4 provision

- 55% teachers reported less teaching time
- Lack of concentrated double periods - scale and diversity of work curtailed.
- Lack of time reported as impacting Pupil Premium and higher ability students most
- Students withdrawn for interventions in EBacc subjects

Underlying decline in creative resilience

“In modern societies, all of life is problem solving. Changes in society, the environment, and in technology mean that the content of applicable knowledge evolves rapidly. Adapting, learning, daring to try out new things and always being ready to learn from mistakes are among the keys to resilience and success in an unpredictable world.”

PISA, The Programme for International Student Assessment (OECD), Introduction to tables for creative problem solving, 2012

Underlying decline in creative resilience

- 76% of respondents felt that there had been a decline in creative resilience
- *“Students demand the magic 'what do I have to do to get an A'. They are reluctant to experiment, resistant to failing as a creative learning tool and do not want to try new skills”*
- *“.....focus on outcomes rather than creative process”*
- *“This is a whole school problem”*

Ways forward

- Raise the status/relevance of creative subjects within the school
- Influence senior management
- Influence parents and carers
- Backfill areas where the accountability measures are curtailing opportunities and creative learning – visits, workshops, Saturday Clubs etc

Proposed 20 ways in which NUA could offer support – this shows those ranking over 60%

- Workshops with professionals/NUA students 93%
- Assemblies with professionals /NUA students 77%
- Visiting artists residencies, exhibitions 77%
- Art trips 75%
- Visits to NUA 70%
- Support with equipment/materials 66%
- Awards/prizes 66%

Ways in which NUA could offer support

NUA along with other universities have introduced degrees such as User Experience Design and VFX that require subjects such as computer science and maths as well as creative subjects. Amongst the lowest ranking options for support were:

- Activities to address gender imbalance 48%
- Interdisciplinary / STEAM opportunities 27%
- Coding for art projects 16%

STEAM

- Whilst the lack of enthusiasm for STEAM was somewhat surprising given that the fusion effect of combining creative and STEM skills is being increasingly recognised within industry and the economy, the disparity is probably a symptom of the pressure teachers are under to deliver against targets and sustain their specific subject area.

Headline recommendations for NUA

Dismantling the five towering pillars of the Ebacc may take time – but there are things that can be put in place to help minimise the damage.

- Share HE assets – status, connectivity, practical resources, financial, research
- Partnership schools
- Leadership – as one NUA academic said “we are all in this together” - develop a community of interest and influence regionally with parents and the arts and cultural community

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Headline recommendations for NUA

- Influencing perceptions will be a slow burner so important to empower teachers – CPD, facilitate network, opportunities for exhibiting etc
- Partnerships with other regional providers – galleries, museums, LEP, ACE, Cultural Education Partnership etc
- Understand individuality of each school, engage with local community and parents to support arts in the school
- Advocate/research/join up thinking at national level with HE and arts and cultural partners –

Further info:

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