

Kingston  
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# Future Skills

YouGov<sup>®</sup>

League Table 2021

# Why?

A policy disconnect between the acknowledged importance of creativity and innovation to the UK economy, its globally recognised pre-eminence, and a description of a degree in the creative industries as low value.

# Report



## Future Skills



44 **Behind every successful business is a great idea; a desire to deliver a service or product or business architecture that's new, different or more effective than what's come before. Across all sectors, the essential ingredient in generating any good idea is a creative mind.**

Creativity is an indispensable asset to business and yet, perhaps because it is by its very nature unquantifiable, it is one that is too often taken for granted or not seen as a priority.

As we emerge from the pandemic, even the most successful companies will be required to adapt and change. This requires the ability to think creatively, to question how processes can be improved, and to identify solutions for a raft of new challenges. The skills needed to achieve this

— indeed those identified in the Future Skills League Table — are invariably skills which are developed and nurtured through a creative education that ignites rather than squanders innate abilities. Those fortunate enough to engage in creative learning are taught and imbued with the confidence to communicate and work with others, to use their initiative and intuition, and to see their subject matter as something that is continually evolving and never confined by a correct way of thinking. I use the word fortunate because sadly, it is increasingly the case that access to a meaningful creative education is the preserve of a privileged minority. It is undervalued, and therefore under funded, meaning fewer and fewer young people are given the opportunity to develop these much-needed skills.

Ric Chi Ind Che

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## Future Skills



44 **Designers spend their lives solving problems. That's what the job is all about. Through their education and training they learn creative, critical and practical skills.**

I am not surprised that problem solving skills came top in this survey. Employers really need people with them, but don't see all the problem solvers, those creative, positive people who change things for the better by coming up with the answers? I am surprised though, at the UK's general lack of recognition for the people who are specially trained and encouraged to be brilliant problem solvers — designers. We have some of the best in the world, trained at some of the best universities and colleges in the world.

Designers spend their lives solving problems. That's what the job is all about. Through their education and training they learn creative, critical and practical skills.

Designers have to develop a rare combination of intuitive and analytical thinking in order to solve the problems facing their employers and clients. If you create a product or engineering design that you might be given the problem of creating a better functioning car, kettle, chair, hat or phone. If you are an architect you are constantly faced with new problems to solve concerning the environment, sustainability, climate change and societal shifts.

Sir John Sorrell CBE

Sir John Sorrell CBE

## The UK Economy Future Challenges

Initial interviews were carried out with 11 senior executives from businesses and 3 universities from across the UK. The employers represented a range of sectors from technology, to financial services to retail; as well as creative businesses across the UK from video games developers to exhibition designers to luxury interiors specialists.

They told us about the barriers they feared might affect the UK's potential to a high-growth, sustainable economy

In Singapore they see 'design thinking' as one of the solutions to increasing global competitiveness. In December 2020, Singapore's Ministry of Trade and Industry partnered with DesignSingapore Council to launch the Design Education Advisory Committee.

The Minister of State of Trade and Industry, Low Yen Ling said "...the DEAC will play a vital role in ensuring an agile work force equipped with the ability to understand changing user behaviour, and capable of innovating and solving complex problems. These valuable skillsets are key in enabling businesses to become more resilient and competitive, especially amid the current global uncertainty.

Emerging economies have modelled creative and cultural policies on the UK's 'soft power'. According to a recent British

## Kingston University + YouGov

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Low Yen Ling  
Minister of State, Ministry for Trade and Industry Singapore

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## Kingston University + YouGov



## Case study Saturday Clubs

The world of work is rapidly changing. This generation will encounter global challenges, which require innovative thinking and versatile skills. Young people's career prospects in regions across the UK will demand creative capacities such as imagination, inquisitiveness, collaboration, persistence and discipline.

From Turo to Hartlepool, the Nation at Saturday Club is raising aspirations for the next generation of creative thinkers by offering 13-16-year-olds the opportunity to study subjects they love for free, at their local university, college, or cultural institution. The programme inspires young people, builds their skills and broadens their understanding of the breadth of possible future study and career pathways open to them. Across five dynamic, year-long programmes — Art & Design, Fashion & Business, Film & Media, Science & Engineering and Writing & Talking — subject strands provide opportunities for young people to develop and gain vital skills employers desire, and supporting regional upskilling and the government's manifesto commitment to levelling-up.

Since 2008 over 10,000 young people and 1,288 educators from 86 institutions have taken part. The National Saturday Club programme is free and has no exams, reducing barriers to young people attending, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds and disadvantaged communities. 80% of young people attending the programme are from widening participation (WP) backgrounds (BAME, first-generation HE, disabled, experience of care, free school meals) and of those 80% do not take part in any other extracurricular activities (16% more than other groups).

Since 2009 over 10,000 young people and 1,288 educators from 86 institutions have taken part.

The National Saturday Club programme is growing, offering increasing numbers of young people the opportunity to take part. Its unique partnership model links together young people with local FE and HE institutions, cultural organisations, schools, industry and individual practitioners. It has become a pivotal part of local and national learning ecologies, empowering young people to develop new skills, gain practical experience and become self-confident creative thinkers, with the ability to express their ideas.

# A conversation with **business**



**Deloitte.**



**accenture**



elliottwood



**team17**



**WINCH DESIGN**



# YouGov insights

- Interviews with businesses and universities prompted over **20 critical skills for the UK's global competitiveness**
- And identified **global threats to UK competitiveness**
- These were put to the YouGov Business panel, consisting of over **2,000 top UK businesses**

# The UK Economy **Future Challenges**



# Top 10 Future Skills

## As chosen by businesses

**Problem-solving** 77%

**Communication** 66%

**Critical thinking** 64%

**Digital skills** 64%

**Analytical skills** 63%

**Initiative** 62%

**Adaptability** 60%

**Creativity** 56%

**Relationship building** 55%

**Questioning mindset** 55%

# Skills for Innovation

**Problem solving skills** are #1 for all sectors.

The top 10 priority skills tell us that it's a real mix of **logical, social, creative, intuitive** as well as **analytical thinking** that business is looking for.

We define this portfolio as '**Skills for Innovation**'.

# Case studies



**TUCAN Studio:**  
Teesside  
University



**Deloitte  
Digital**



**Saturday  
Clubs**

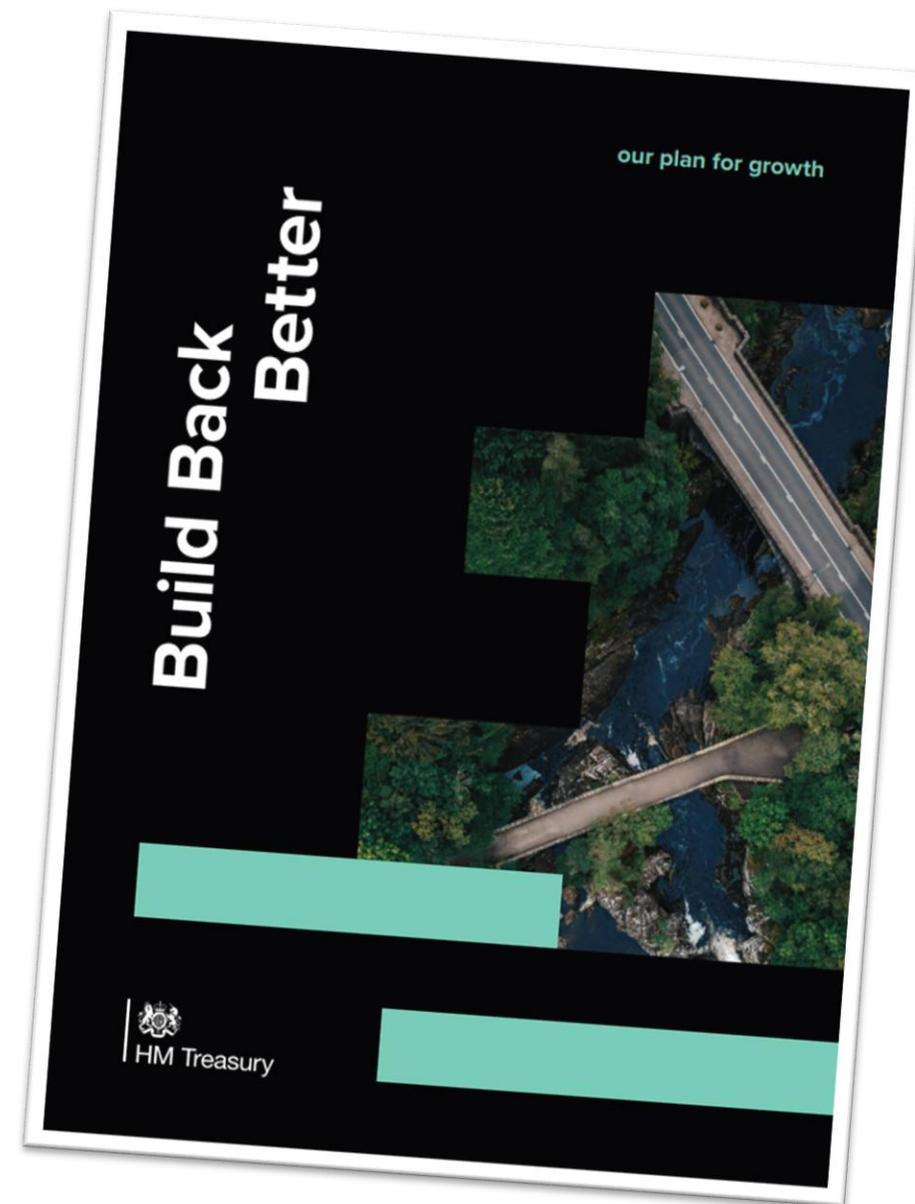


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# Connecting to policy

Innovation is a key pillar in the Government's 'Plan for Growth':

“Support and incentivise the development of the creative ideas and technologies that will shape the UK's future high-growth, sustainable and secure economy.”



# ... and business need

Designers spend their lives solving problems. That's what the job is all about. Through their education and training they learn creative, critical and practical skills.

**Sir John Sorrell CBE**

Designer and UK Business Ambassador

Without investing in creativity we won't produce the really innovative tech businesses which go beyond tech to the end-to-end experience. If we don't grow the talent, someone else will.

**Andrew Pearce**

Managing Director, Accenture

These valuable skillsets are key in enabling businesses to become more resilient and competitive, especially amid the current global uncertainty.

**Low Yen Ling**

Minister of State, Ministry for Trade and Industry, Singapore

# Next steps

## Government

- **Invest in the skills for innovation** the UK needs to support its future competitive advantage
- BEIS to convene key government departments ahead of the CSR to **promote the skills for innovation we need** to build back better
- DfE (working with its equivalents in the devolved nations) **to develop a Creative and Innovation Skills Strategy** that identifies and promotes strategically important creative subjects and skills that businesses want
- DCMS to continue to **support the Creative Careers Programme**, and develop programmes in government to embed creative skills across departments

## Regulators

- **Define high value degrees by the skills for innovation** students acquire and businesses say they want
- **Incentivise and reward** provision of strategically important creative subjects that align with business skills needs
- **Develop metrics that recognise skills for innovation** rather than simple salary data that does not support entrepreneurship, start-ups or future skills

# Next steps

## Universities

- **Promote high value innovation skills** across their subject portfolios
- **Embed business and entrepreneurial skills** in creative degree curricula
- **Entrench multi-faculty consultancy** across the curriculum
- **Work with local and national employers** to deliver career opportunities that foster future-facing skills
- **Build partnerships with employers to foster creative approaches to problem solving**, from hackathons to short courses and micro-credentials

## Employers

- **Recruit and reward applicants with the skills that are the foundation of the UK's competitiveness**; the skills that drive the creative ideas and technologies that will shape the UK's high-growth, sustainable and secure economy
- **Develop graduate recruitment programmes with local and regional Higher Education Institutions** to acquire graduates with the skills that drive innovation
- **Engage with opportunities to build future skills**, such as the Department for Education's Bootcamps



# Discussion