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THE SUTTON TRUST

A Class Act

Social mobility and the creative industries

About the Sutton Trust

The Sutton Trust is a foundation which improves social mobility in the UK through evidence-based programmes, research and policy advocacy.

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Key findings

Access to creative degrees

Socio-economic background

- There are low proportions of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds on a range of creative degrees. This mirrors trends seen across higher education generally. For creative subjects, those from the most affluent backgrounds (discussed here as 'upper-middle-class') constitute very high proportions of students at the most prestigious institutions, and in key creative subjects like Music and Art.

- At four institutions – Oxford and Cambridge, and King's College London (Russell Group) and Bath (Pre-92) – more than half of creative students come from upper-middle-class backgrounds. These are greater proportions than the averages for students on all other programmes at KCL (45%) and Bath (43%), but are in line with students on all other programmes at Oxbridge.

- Oxbridge (4% Cambridge, 5% Oxford) and Bath (4%), Bristol (5%) and Manchester (7%) have the lowest proportions of creative students from working-class backgrounds. In all cases these percentages are lower than for students on all other programmes at these institutions (6% at Oxford and Cambridge, 7% at Bath and Bristol, and 19% at Manchester).

- The specialist institutions (including conservatoires and the higher education institutions specialising in music and performing arts) with the largest percentage of students from upper-middle-class backgrounds are the Royal College of Music (43%), Royal Academy of Music (41%), and Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (34%).

School type

- As with class background, overall proportions of state and independent school educated students in all creative courses conceal considerable inequalities at the most prestigious institutions. Although the overall average for privately educated students is 7% on all courses in our dataset, many institutions have far higher proportions.

- Oxbridge's creative subjects have higher proportions of privately educated students (32%) than all other subjects at these two institutions (24%) and the overall average in HE (7%).

- At the same time, Oxbridge 's creative subjects have higher proportions of state school students (49%) than all students at these two institutions (43%). This is a much lower proportion of state school students than all creative HE (76%) and all other HE subjects (68%).

- Royal Academy of Music (60%), Royal College of Music (56%), Durham (48%), King's College London (46%) and Bath (42%) all have very high proportions of privately educated students studying creative subjects. Indeed, all of these institutions have higher proportions than Oxbridge's creative subjects (32%).

- These specialist/creative focused institutions present a particularly complex picture. There are huge variations. For example, The University of Creative Arts has only 3% of its intake from private schools, while the Royal Academy of Music has 60%. Royal College of Music (56%) and Guildhall (31%) also have very high proportions of privately educated students.

- The proportions of privately educated students on creative courses must be viewed in the context of the collapse of creative education in state schools.

Subject differences

- Only 5 Russell Group institutions offer Art degrees. Almost half of Oxford's Art students are from upper-middle-class origins and Leeds, Newcastle and Edinburgh all have over 1/3rd from these origins.

- Drama courses are offered by most Russell Group institutions. The Universities of Sheffield (46%), Birmingham (44%), and Exeter (44%) all have proportions of upper-middle-class students over 40%, higher than the average proportion of upper-middle-class students studying all subjects at the Russell Group (37%). Specialist institutions such as Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA), Central and University of the Arts London (UAL) have proportions lower than the overall average of upper-middle-class students (25%) on all subjects.

- Music (11%) has a far larger percentage of privately educated students than any other creative subject. This proportion is also higher than the average for all other students (7%). By contrast Games (video game design) (2%) has the lowest proportion of any creative subject and is much lower than non-creative subjects too.

- Oxford, Cambridge and King's College London all have over 50% of their music students from upper-middle-class origins, and 6 Russell Group institutions have between 40-49% of their intake from these backgrounds.

- There are very low proportions of ethnic minority men and women in Art, Music and Drama, irrespective of their social class background. Clearly creative HE subjects have an ethnicity, as much as a class, problem.

Working in the creative industries

- Degrees are central to the creative workforce. Up to 69% of those working in core creative occupations (such as actors, dancers, artists and writers) have degrees, compared to 26% of the entire workforce.

- Among creative workers aged 35 and below, there are around 4 times as many people from middle-class compared to working-class origins (but less than twice as many in all occupations).

- For those under 35 from working class origins, 66% of creative workers have a degree compared to 19% of the wider workforce.

- While having a degree is an advantage for all groups, it seems that it is less critical for white men from middle-class origins working in London, where their background and/or social networks are more likely to offer them an entry point (and the means to persist in these precarious careers) even if they do not have degrees.

- Who can access creative degrees really does matter. On average, 37% of graduates in creative jobs have a creative degree, rising to 43% of those under 35. But there are important variations: 89% of architects and 83% of graphic designers have creative degrees, compared to 6% of graduate marketing and sales directors and 6% of advertising and PR directors.

Elite figures in the creative industries

- Across television, film and music, high-profile figures in the creative industries are much more likely to have attended private school than the UK population (31% compared to 7%).

- For example, 43% of classical musicians have attended an independent school (over six times higher than the UK average of 7%). However, just 8% of pop stars are privately educated.

- Bafta-nominated actors are five times more likely to have attended a private school than the UK population, at 35%.

- 86% of classical musicians have attended university, considerably higher than the UK average of around 20%. 58% of classical musicians attended an arts specialist higher education institution 1 in 4 (25%) attended the Royal Academy of Music for undergraduate study, which this report shows to have a large intake of privately educated students. 12% attended either Oxford or Cambridge.

- University attendance amongst pop stars is low, with only 20% having attended (similar to the UK average).

- 64% of actors have attended university, with 29% attending specialist arts institutions (including drama schools). 9% attended an Oxbridge institution and a further 6% attended other Russell Group institutions.

Recommendations

For government:

Access to the arts for children and young people

All children and young people, regardless of their socio-economic background, should have access to a high-quality creative education in schools, as well as access to wider experiences in the arts:

- **State schools should be incentivised to offer creative subjects and extracurricular activities.** In recent years, the exclusion of creative subjects in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is likely to have disincentivised schools from offering these subjects. The government should examine accountability measures and look to remove this disincentive for creative subjects, as well as reviewing teacher incentives (e.g. bursaries) for creative subjects. Ensuring all students can access creative subjects and wider activities in schools should be a significant part of the government's ongoing curriculum review.

- **The government should introduce an 'arts premium' for schools, so schools can pay for arts opportunities, including music lessons.** This funding should be focused on children eligible for free school meals, whose families will be the least able to afford these opportunities outside the school gates.

- **Government should aim for every state school student to have access to at least one creative trip or activity a year,** for example visiting the theatre, an art exhibition or a musical performance. Schools should be funded to allow them to offer free places on these trips, at a minimum, for all students eligible for free school meals.

"Ensuring all students can access creative subjects and wider activities in schools should be a significant part of the government's ongoing curriculum review."

The arts higher education sector

- **Conservatoires and other creative arts institutions that receive state funding should be banned from charging for auditions.** Many institutions, including Leeds Conservatoire, The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in London and the Liverpool Theatre School have already scrapped their audition fees to improve accessibility for working class applicants.

- **Government should redouble efforts on access across the higher education sector, with a focus on socio-economic disadvantage, and stronger regulatory expectations.** This should include a specific review of access to conservatoires and other specialist arts institutions - where access can be worse than the most prestigious universities, but which have historically been held to much lower levels of scrutiny.

- **The wider value of creative degrees should be taken into account when making funding and policy decisions for the higher education sector.** Measuring the quality of creative degree programmes on graduate earnings alone does not take into account the nature of the sector, for example that creative degree graduates are more likely to work freelance, or that many are forced to take unpaid internships to advance. Graduates often take such roles to work towards better paid positions in the future, and accurate earnings data for such roles is difficult to capture. The creative industries also contribute substantially to the UK economy.

Access to careers in the creative industries

- **Existing legislation on unpaid internships should be tightened.** Unpaid internships are particularly prevalent in the creative industries, and act as a barrier for talented young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Unpaid internships over 4 weeks in length should be outright banned, alongside better enforcement of current minimum wage legislation.

"Unpaid internships are particularly prevalent in the creative industries, and act as a barrier for talented young people from disadvantaged backgrounds."

- **Government should make reporting of socio-economic background (as measured by parental occupational class) mandatory for organisations with over 250 employees.** While some organisations in the creative industries already measure this data, it is far from the norm. Larger employers should set example for smaller employers in creative fields.

- **Socio-economic inclusion should be a condition of arts funding**. Organisations accessing funding through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, or via Arts Council England, should be expected to ensure that people on low incomes or from low-income backgrounds are both creators of and able to access art created with these funds.

For the creative higher education sector

- **Outreach activities from the arts higher education sector (including conservatoires and other specialist arts institutions, as well as universities offering creative arts subjects) should start early, with a focus on reaching young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds.** Engaging with disadvantaged children from a young age is important to ensure they can develop their skills over a long period of time, setting themselves up for higher education. This includes musical instrument lessons, acting training and art activities, as well as information on the full range of roles available in the creative industries. Creative higher education institutions should work with schools and creative settings in their local area to offer tailored support for those who have shown interest in a creative career.

- **The creative higher education sector should explore how contextual admissions can be used for their courses**. The sector should have an open conversation on how best the wider context in which an applicant's current skill level (for example in a musical instrument, their performance at audition, or their artistic portfolio) can be taken into account when accessing their potential to succeed on their chosen course. This should consider varying access to resources for young people from different socio-economic backgrounds. The use of contextual offers is increasingly common for university degrees, but much less progress has been made for specialist creative subjects.

- **Institutions should offer financial support to students from lower income homes that recognises the specific needs of each course.** This should include ending audition fees, providing financial support for travel to interviews for lower income applicants, and providing financial support to this group of students once they've started their course. Grants and bursaries should be available for equipment costs, which can vary greatly between subjects, and which students are unlikely to be able to cover using existing maintenance support.

- **Higher education institutions should better integrate internships and work experience in their creative programmes**. Young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds often lack the connections needed to secure relevant and sought-after work experience opportunities. HE institutions should act to bridge that gap, connecting students to employers.

For creative industry employers

- **Employers offering internships in the creative industries should pay their interns, ideally at least the Living Wage Foundation's Real Living Wage, and opportunities in the creative industries should be openly advertised.** Young people from families unable to provide considerable financial support are locked out of unpaid opportunities. Openly advertising roles ensure they are available to those looking to enter the industry without connections.

- **Low pay and poor conditions should be tackled in the sector to improve recruitment and retention.** People working in the creative industries can spend years in poorly paid roles on short-term contracts or as freelancers. This type of unstable employment is often inaccessible for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, often without access to familial financial support.

- **Employers in the creative industries should collect and analyse socio-economic data for applicants and employees, as well as reporting on their class pay gap.** Collecting socio-economic data, ideally parental education, will enable employers to identify inequalities in applications, hires, progress and retention. Looking at this alongside other data on protected characteristics, including gender and ethnicity, will allow employers to identify specific target groups for outreach and support.

Introduction

From acting in an award-winning film to producing a number one album, getting to the top of the creative industries is a dream for many young people. But access to such careers, both behind the scenes and in front of an audience, is currently far from equal. For young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds in particular, there are major barriers.

Levels of social mobility in the creative sector have remained low since the 1970s, with 16.4% of creative workers born between 1953 and 1962 having a working-class background, compared to just 7.9% for those born four decades later.[1] Moreover, in 2020, 52% of the creative workforce were from high socio-economic backgrounds, compared to 38% across all industries.[2]

And who can access these careers really does matter. Art plays a vital role in shaping the society we live in. When those from better-off backgrounds dominate the creative industries, it is their stories and ideas that we all see told through TV shows, films, plays, music or dance. The world is shown back to us through their lens, with an impact on the cultural and social life of the country. These positions are also highly sought after, giving those with a creative flair an outlet for their passions and talents. For young people from poorer homes, the domination of the creative industries by the better-off can make these fields seem 'elitist' and out of reach. They may feel that their stories cannot be told and that top, well-paid jobs on the stage or on screen are just not possible for them, limiting their own ambitions.

"When those from better-off backgrounds dominate the creative industries, it is their stories and ideas that we all see told through TV shows, films, plays, music or dance."

Despite the evidence, many in the creative industries do not see the access crisis in front of them. Those working in the creative industries (particularly in senior positions) often view access as meritocratic - based on people's skills and abilities, rather than their background.[3]

[1] Brook, O. *et al.* (2023). Social Mobility and 'Openness' in Creative Occupations since the 1970s. *Sociology*, *57* (4), 789-810. Available at: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00380385221129953#fn8-00380385221129953

[2] Carey, H., O'Brien, D., and Gable, O. (2021). *Social mobility in the Creative Economy Rebuilding and levelling up?* Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/research-reports/social-mobility-in-the-creative-economy-rebuilding-and-levelling-up

[3] Taylor, M., and O'Brien, D. (2017). 'Culture is a Meritocracy': Why Creative Workers' Attitudes may Reinforce Social Inequality. *Sociological Research Online*, *22* (4), 27-47. Available at: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1360780417726732

The Sutton Trust has examined access to the creative industries before. The 2019 report *Elitist Britain* found the privately educated are over-represented across the creative sector.[4] The Trust also looked at access to these industries in *Pay As You Go?*, finding that internships were a common route into the sector, but were often unpaid, with those from poorer backgrounds less likely to participate in them.[5]

The creative industries in the UK are at a crucial turning point. Within the higher education sector, universities face an ongoing crisis in undergraduate funding, direct cuts to government support for specific creative courses, and creative course closures. In the workplace, the film and television industries are facing a particular employment crisis. This is the result of funding issues, including declining advertising revenues, reduced funding for public service broadcasters and a lack of available projects. These issues persist even a year after the US writers strikes, with the impact of those strikes being felt worldwide.[6] A difficult job market and uncertainty in the sector will undoubtedly hit those from poorer backgrounds the hardest, with fewer options for financial support to fall back on.

Access to creative industries and engagement in the arts appears to be a priority for the new government, with the subject a key feature of both the party's manifesto and the prime minister's speech at the 2024 Labour Party Conference – Sir Keir Starmer said *"Every child deserves the chance to study the creative subjects that widen their horizons, provide skills employers do value, and prepares them for the future, the jobs and the world that they will inherit"* .[7]

At a time of change in the sector, as well as in the wider political landscape. This is the Sutton Trust's first report to look in detail at access to the creative industries, including new analysis of Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA) data from academics Professor Dave O'Brien, Dr Orian Brook and Dr Mark Taylor on social mobility within creative higher education courses, alongside work

[4] The Sutton Trust. (2019). *Elitist Britain 2019*. The Sutton Trust and The Social Mobility Commission. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/elitist-britain-2019/

[5] Cullinane, C. and Montacute, R. (2018). *Pay As You Go?* Sutton Trust. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/internships-pay-as-you-go/

[6] Sweney, M. (2024, September 14). *'Survive to 2025': UK TV production firms fight to stay afloat in slump.* The Guardian. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/media/2024/sep/14/uk-tv-production-companies-indies-commissioning-spend

[7] Puffett, N. (2024, September 24). Starmer: Everyone 'deserves chance to be touched by art'. Arts Professional. Available at: https://www.artsprofessional.co.uk/news/starmer-everyone-deserves-chance-be-touched-art

carried out by researchers at the Sutton Trust, looking at the educational backgrounds of elite and 'high-profile' figures in television, film and music.

This research is part of a series of work on the creative sectors from the Sutton Trust, which also includes a new initiative on access to the screen industries, launching in the coming months with the British Screen Forum.

Policy background

What do we mean by the creative industries?

Box 1: Defining the creative industries

The creative industries are diverse and complex, with each part of the sector including a variety of front-facing as well as behind the scenes roles. While these sectors are often discussed as a collective, as shown the analysis throughout this report, socio-economic access varies across these fields. The creative industries covered in this report align with the industries covered in creative academic literature and recognised as creative occupations by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. These include:

- Advertising and marketing
- Architecture
- Crafts (such as furniture making, painting and sculpture)
- Design and designer fashion
- Film, TV, Radio and Photography
- Museums, galleries and libraries
- Music, performing and visual arts
- Publishing
- IT, software and computer services (including video games)

The socio-economic makeup of the creative workforce

Analysis of the Office for National Statistics Longitudinal Study finds that since the 1970s, the proportion of working-class creatives such as actors, musicians and writers has shrunk by half. Overall, 16.4% of creative workers born between 1953 and 1962 had working-class backgrounds, with the

proportion falling to just 7.9% four decades later.[8] These findings echo other research which suggests that *absolute* social mobility (when someone's occupation is ranked higher than their parent's) is on the decline in many creative industries.[9]

At the elite end of the sector, previous research from the Sutton Trust found that 38% of the richest individuals across TV, film and music went to an independent school – a figure that is over five times higher than the 7% of the UK population who attended these schools overall.[10] School attendance is a useful proxy measure for the socio-economic circumstances someone grew up in, with private school attendance in particular strongly related to family income. Private school attendance rates are close to 0% for children at most income levels, and only rise above 10% for those in families on the top 5% of incomes.[11]

Looking at higher education, 42% of the richest figures in TV, film and music had been to university. Considering 19% of the overall UK population are graduates, this suggests creative industries like film are dominated by a small pool of higher educated individuals. This will change over time, as more of the population attend HE, but for now it is a striking difference.

Less is known about the class pay gap in the creative industries, with existing work finding a variable picture amongst the separate fields forming the creative sector. Again, *The Class Ceiling* found there was a negligible gap in TV in and film as well as a £3,000 (but not statistically significant gap) in performing arts, compared to a large gap of over £15,000 in the financial and legal sectors.[12] But the fact that a large number of creative roles are freelance (around a third are self-employed, including freelance), which is defined differently across creative fields,

[8] Brook, O. *et al.* (2023). Social Mobility and 'Openness' in Creative Occupations since the 1970s. *Sociology*, *57* (4), 789-810. Available at: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00380385221129953#fn8-00380385221129953
Note; the researchers argue that part of this change is due to changes in the LFS baseline figures for the general population and a decline in the overall population defined as working-class.
[9] Brook, O., O'Brien, D., and Taylor, M. (2018*). There was no golden age: social mobility into cultural and creative occupations*. Universities of Edinburgh and Sheffield. Available at: https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/7njy3
[10] The Sutton Trust. (2019). *Elitist Britain 2019*. The Sutton Trust and The Social Mobility Commission. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/elitist-britain-2019/
[11] Anders, J. and Henseke, G. (2021). *Housing wealth, not bursaries, explains much of private school participation for those without high income.* Centre for Education Policy and Equalising Opportunities (CEPEO). Available at: https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/2021/02/08/housing-wealth-not-bursaries-explains-much-of-private-school-participation-for-those-without-high-income/
[12] Friedman, S. and Laurison, D. (2019). *The Class Ceiling: Why it Pays to be Privileged*. Bristol: Policy Press.

complicates data reporting.[13] Earnings across each field also differ, with specialist and embedded creative occupations (those not in a creative industry, such as a graphic designer working for a charity) often better paid than supportive roles.

Given the longstanding trends regarding limited access to the creative industries for those from disadvantaged backgrounds, the following section explores existing literature on barriers to the creative sector across the life course.

Accessing the creative industries

School and society

The barriers to a creative career start early. For example, those who study creative subjects earlier in their education are the most likely to go onto these subjects at higher education, as creative GCSEs and A Levels are often entry requirements for creative degrees.

Even for those not intending to have a career in a creative field, access to these subjects can have wider benefits. There are a range of studies which indicate studying such subjects allows students to express their creativity and has also been linked to improved wellbeing and engagement with the school day as a whole.[14] For example, research from the Cultural Learning Alliance has found that participation in creative subjects is correlated with a 16% to 19% improvement in cognitive ability.[15]

But participation in creative subjects (particularly drama and music) has declined over recent years, with school funding pressures and an increased focus on STEM contributing to fewer students studying these subjects at GCSE and A Level, notably in disadvantaged state schools.[16] Indeed, recent teacher polling from the Sutton Trust has highlighted cuts to subject

[13] Social Mobility Commission. (2021). *Socio-economic Diversity and Inclusion toolkit: Creative Industries.* Social Mobility Commission. Available at: https://socialmobility.independent-commission.uk/app/uploads/2023/08/SMC-Creative_Industries-Toolkit_Sept2021.pdf

[14] Arts Award. (2024). *The importance of arts education for students and how to get your subject noticed*. Arts Award. Available at: https://learn.artsaward.org.uk/importance-arts-education

[15] Cultural Learning Alliance. (2017). *Imagine Nation: The Value of Cultural Learning*. Cultural Learning Alliance. Available at: https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/ImagineNation_The_Case_for_Cultural_Learning.pdf

[16] The Guardian. (2023, February 7). *The Guardian view on arts education: a creativity crisis*. The Guardian. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/feb/07/the-guardian-view-on-arts-education-a-creativity-crisis

choices both at GCSE and A Level.[17] And between 2010 and 2023, GCSE entries to creative subjects dropped by around 47%; for design and technology subjects at GCSE, the decline was 73%, while dance saw a 60% decline and media/film/TV studies declined by 52%. At A Level, entries fell by 29% over the same time period, with notable declines in dance (57%) and music (46%).[18] Moreover, analysis from Education Datalab has shown that those in schools with the most disadvantaged intakes are less likely to study a creative subject (and if they are, it is more likely that the qualification is not a GCSE) and disadvantaged students are more likely to be in a school that does not offer creative subjects.[19]

Declines in the uptake of creative subjects aligns with the introduction of the English Baccalaureate (known also as the EBacc) in 2010. Creative subjects are not a part of the EBacc, while all STEM subjects are – as the EBacc forms a significant part of the criteria a school's Progress 8 score is based on, there is now an incentive for schools to focus on 'core' subjects like English and maths rather than creative subjects.[20] Coupled with higher resource costs for subjects like art and design, some state schools have reported they are not able to use their already stretched funds on these subjects.[21] Indeed, the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Music Education found that declining numbers of students taking GCSE music since 2014 mirrored a decline in the number of secondary school music teachers over the same period.[22] Overall in the arts, teacher numbers fell by 27% between 2011/12 to 2023/24, most notably in design and technology (52%) and media studies (40%).[23]

[17] The Sutton Trust. (2023). *School Funding and Pupil Premium 2023*. Sutton Trust. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/school-funding-and-pupil-premium-2023/

[18] Cultural Learning Alliance. (2022). *Arts GCSE and A Level entries 2022.* CLA. Available at: https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/arts-gcse-and-a-level-entries-2022/#:~:text=GCSE%20Arts%20Entries%20decline%20by,Design%20%26%20Technology%20A%20Level%20entries

[19] Beynon, K. and Thomson, D. (2024, March 5). *How has access to creative subjects changed over time?* FFT Education Datalab. Available at: https://ffteducationdatalab.org.uk/2024/03/how-has-access-to-creative-subjects-changed-over-time/

[20] The Guardian. (2023, February 7). *The Guardian view on arts education: a creativity crisis*. The Guardian. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/feb/07/the-guardian-view-on-arts-education-a-creativity-crisis

[21] Fazackerley, A. (2022, November 12). *Art, drama and languages to become 'preserve of private schools' as state sector cuts bite.* The Observer. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/nov/12/art-drama-languages-and-geography-to-become-preserve-of-private-schools-as-state-sector-cuts-bite

[22] All-Party Parliamentary Group for Music Education. (2019). *Music Education: State of the Nation*. Music Education, the Incorporated Society of Musicians and the University of Sussex. Available at: https://www.ism.org/images/images/State-of-the-Nation-Music-Education-WEB.pdf

[23] Ashton, H. *et al.* (2024). *The state of the Arts*. Campaign for the Arts & Centre for Cultural and Media Policy Studies, University of Warwick. Available at: https://www.campaignforthearts.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/The-State-of-the-Arts.pdf

While there has been a decline in funding for creative subjects (as well as in extra-curricular activities) in the state sector - closely aligned with the narrative on the importance of STEM and the EBacc - creative subjects and activities continue to be funded and offered in private schools. The Social Mobility Commission found variation in the amount and range of extra-curricular activities (including creative activities) when comparing state and private schools, with students in private schools often encouraged to take up activities on offer to contribute to being a 'more well-rounded individual'.[24] Moreover, even if schools are offering extra-curricular activities in creative fields, cost can be a barrier for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Research from the Social Mobility Commission in 2019 found that household income was the main driver for young people's participation in extracurricular activities, most notably music and sport.[25]

But it is what is being covered in core school hours that has the largest impact on disadvantaged young people, who are less likely to be able to engage with creative activities outside of school. For instance, 2021 research found that 50% of children from independent schools take part in regular music lessons, compared to only 15% of state schools pupils.[26] Less than 1 in 4 contracted music teachers work in a state school.[27] Taking part in extra-curricular lessons and classes, as well as engaging in cultural activities growing up are important to inspire young people to take a creative path and help them to develop the skills they will need to succeed in the future, if they choose a creative career. A relationship has been found between cultural engagement (such as visiting museums and art galleries) at a young age and aspiring to go into higher education.[28]

[24] Donnelly, M. *et al.* (2019). *An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility*. Social Mobility Commission. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818679/An_Unequal_Playing_Field_report.pdf

[25] Donnelly, M. *et al.* (2019). *An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility*. Social Mobility Commission. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818679/An_Unequal_Playing_Field_report.pdf

[26] BOP Consulting. (2022). *Research into the classical music ecosystem*. BOP Consulting for the BBC. Available at: https://abo.org.uk/assets/files/News-and-Press/BBC-Classical-Music-Review-BOP-Consulting-March-May-2022.pdf?v=1678811834

[27] Sharkey, J. (2024, April 21). *The figures that show classical music is skewed towards rich kids*. The Times. Available at: https://www.thetimes.com/uk/article/the-school-stats-that-show-classical-music-is-skewed-towards-rich-kids-wddsgptjj

[28] Hartas, D. (2016). Young people's educational aspirations: psychosocial factors and the home environment. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 19 (9), 1145-1163. Available at: http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/77073/

Analysis of audience data shows those from the poorest parts of the UK are less likely to attend many forms of cultural activities, from films and plays to art exhibitions and opera.[29] Indeed, in *Life Lessons*, the Sutton Trust found that engagement in these kinds of activities was lower for disadvantaged pupils compared to their more affluent peers.[30] Other research highlights the concentration of cultural venues like museums in big cities like London, meaning those in more isolated areas are less likely to visit.[31]

"Analysis of audience data shows those from the poorest parts of the UK are less likely to attend many forms of cultural activities, from films and plays to art exhibitions and the Opera."

Understanding the barriers discussed here provides important context for the policy focal points of the analysis presented in our report – higher education and access to the workplace.

The importance of higher education

Attending university is a vital stepping stone for many going into a creative career. In 2021 over 70% of the creative workforce held a degree; far higher than the 36.5% of the workforce overall.[32] Furthermore, analysis of Labour Force Survey data from 2019 shows those who are degree educated and from a privileged background are 5.6 times more likely to work in the creative industries, compared to those from lower socio-economic backgrounds with GCSE-level qualifications or below.[33]

Looking at *creative* degrees specifically (the approach taken in this report's new analysis), data from the graduate class of 2012/13 shows that these graduates make up 46% of graduates working in the creative sector overall.[34] This figure is higher for certain sectors including music,

[29] Brook, O., O'Brien, D. and Taylor, M. (2020). *Culture is bad for you*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
[30] Cullinane, C. and Montacute, R. (2017). *Life Lessons*. Sutton Trust. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/life-lessons-workplace-skills/
[31] Brook, O. (2016). Spatial equity and cultural participation: how access influences attendance at museums and galleries in London. *Cultural Trends,* 25 (1), 21-34. Available at: https://www.research.ed.ac.uk/en/publications/spatial-equity-and-cultural-participation-how-access-influences-a
[32] Comunian, R. *et al.* (2023). *Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category*. APPG for Creative Diversity. Available at: www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education
[33] Carey, H. *et al.* (2020). *Getting in and getting on: Class, participation and job quality in the UK's creative industries*. Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, University of Edinburgh and Work Advance. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/researchreports/getting-in-and-getting-on-class-participation-and-job-quality-inthe-uks-creative-industries
[34] Bloom, M. (2020). *For Love or Money? Graduate motivations and the economic returns of creative higher education inside and outside the creative industries. Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre*. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/assets/publications/PEC-research-report-For-Love-or-Money.pdf

performing and visual arts (78%). Moreover, creative graduates were more likely to be in specialist roles (54.1%) in creative industries than non-creative graduates (33.8%), suggesting that creative higher education facilitates development of advanced creative skills that are valued by employers.

Many creative courses have subject-specific entry requirements, which students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are less likely to reach. Particularly for conservatoires (specialist music higher education institutions), drama, art and fashion schools, applicants often have to demonstrate their ability beyond exam grades - through auditions, showreels and portfolios. To apply, many institutions charge an assessment fee, and charge applicants for 'consultations' with professors to discuss an applicant's suitability for a place. These extensive application criteria place notable financial burdens on applicants, which are likely to be unaffordable for many students. While UCAS offer waivers for university applications overall, other fee waivers set by specific institutions vary, and little financial support is available for consultations across the board. UCAS signposts students to look at individual university websites for guidance, but this can be confusing to navigate.[35]

Accessing a creative degree allows someone to build up skills and networks required to enter related industries. Research based on interviews with theatre graduates highlights that graduates can find paid work opportunities and professional contacts through their university, and their studies can provide key opportunities to develop their work portfolio.[36] While this only tells the story of one creative sector, it is likely to apply to other sectors like fashion and music (which also involve work portfolios).

Work experience, placements and internships are also offered through creative degrees, from internships in between term time to year-long industry placements. These opportunities offer an importance chance to develop employable skills like communication and allow a student to build a network of industry professionals, making them stand out from the

[35] Comunian, R. *et al.* (2023). *Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category*. APPG for Creative Diversity. Available at: www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education

[36] De Bernard, M. *et al.* (2023). The role of higher education in sustainable creative careers: exploring UK theatre graduates and theatre careers. *Industry and Higher Education*, 0 (0), 1-13. Available at: https://centaur.reading.ac.uk/112481/1/de-bernard-et-al-2023-the-role-of-higher-education-in-sustainable-creative-careers-exploring-uk-theatre-graduates-and.pdf

crowd of other graduates applying for entry-level creative roles.[37] Accessing a placement through a degree programme can help to mitigate issues in finding placements for disadvantaged young people. [38] However, there is often an expectation for students to find their own placements, and students who have fewer existing contacts in their desired industry may also find the application process harder to navigate.

Not having work experience or opportunities like unpaid internships may explain why even those from lower income backgrounds holding a degree may find it difficult to get a highly competitive entry-level role in a creative industry. [39] Those from poorer homes with fewer financial resources cannot afford to take an unpaid role, and doing so may take up time that could be spent working in a paid part-time role to support their studies.[40]

The evidence here shows there is value in studying a creative subject at university, despite issues raised following the 2019 Augar review of higher education (outlined in box 2 – see below).

Knowing how vital degrees are to a creative career, and the specific benefits of studying a creative programme, it is important that the new analysis in this report considers *who* is accessing creative degrees.

[37] Ryan, L. and Lőrinc, M. (2018). Perceptions, prejudices and possibilities: young people narrating apprenticeship experiences. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 39 (6), 762- 777.
[38] Comunian, R. *et al.* (2023). *Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category*. APPG for Creative Diversity. Available at: www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education
[39] Allen, K. *et al.* (2010). *Work placements in the arts and cultural sector: diversity, equality and access*. Equality Challenge Unit, the Institute for Policy Studies in Education, London Metropolitan University. Available at: https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/work-placements-arts-and-cultural-sector-diversity-equality-and-access
[40] Comunian, R. *et al.* (2023). *Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category*. APPG for Creative Diversity. Available at: www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education

Box 2: Creative degrees and the Augar review

Following the Augar review, the previous government planned to limit the number of courses deemed "low quality" which they defined on the basis of graduate earnings and access to jobs. The review presented evidence from the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) that five years after graduation, medicine and dentistry graduates had median earnings of £52,900, compared to £21,200 for creative graduates.

In spring 2024, following points raised in the Augar review, the Department for Education announced that grant funding for the Office for Students to award top-up funding for creative and performing arts courses were frozen at £16.7m in for 2024/25, the same as the previous year, resulting in a real-terms cut due to inflation. In 2020/21 the grant was worth £36m, before it was cut by around 50%.[41]

Barriers to entering the workforce

While those with a degree are more likely to access a creative career, there are further barriers to such professions for disadvantaged young people: 2019 Labour Force Survey data shows that degree holders from affluent backgrounds have 13% odds of getting a job in the creative industries compared to 8% of those with a degree from working-class backgrounds.[42] Hiring individuals based on similarities in educational background and professional networks is common in creative industries, but this limits the diversity of the talent pool organisations hire from.[43]

"Working unpaid or for a low wage (potentially in a precarious contract) is less accessible for someone from a disadvantaged background who is less likely to have sources of financial support to fall back on."

A notable barrier is unpaid work. This is particularly common for those at the start of their career in creative industries; a 2018 survey found nearly 9 in 10 respondents working in a creative occupation have worked for free in some way, with notably 48% of under 30s saying they had undertaken an unpaid internship.[44] Previous Sutton Trust research also found that those interested in the creative industries were also often stuck in a cycle of

[41] Adams, R. (2024, April 4). *Creative arts courses at English universities face funding cut*. The Guardian. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/education/2024/apr/04/ministers-to-cut-funding-for-performing-and-creative-arts-courses-in-england

[42] Carey, H. *et al.* (2020). *Getting in and getting on: Class, participation and job quality in the UK's creative industries*. Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, University of Edinburgh and Work Advance. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/research_report_entr/getting-in-and-getting-on-class-participation-and-job-quality-in-the-uks-creative-industries/

[43] Koppman, S. (2016). 'Different Like Me: Why Cultural Omnivores Get Creative Jobs',. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 61 (2), 291–33.

[44] Brook, O., O'Brien, D., and Taylor, M. (2018). *Panic! Social Class, Taste and Inequalities in the Creative Industries*. Arts Emergency, CREATE, The University of Edinburgh and The University of Sheffield. Available at: https://www.arts-emergency.org/files/reports/Panic-Social-Class-Taste-and-Inequalities-in-the-Creative-Industries.pdf

unpaid placements, with 32% of interns in the creative sector saying they had completed 3 or more internships.[45]

Those starting out in a creative career often work unpaid to gain experience and build their portfolio; but there is often social stratification when it comes to such placements, with the most enriching reserved for those from more affluent backgrounds.[46] Working unpaid or for a low wage (potentially in a precarious contract) is less accessible for someone from a disadvantaged background who is less likely to have sources of financial support to fall back on.[47] The Sutton Trust also found evidence of this in 2018; the Arts (including theatre, TV, film, fashion and music) had one of the highest levels of non-payment of minimum wage (86%) when compared to sectors like Law and Finance, with working-class graduates substantially under-represented.[48]

Freelance work is also commonplace as different skills are required for different projects, and people are employed to bring a specific skillset to a team collaborating creatively.[49] Roles are often contractual, from a designer being brought on board to a team for a specific project to an actor being hired for a theatre role for a limited running tour.[50] Around 32% of the creative workforce are freelancers, with even higher proportions seen for musicians (80%) as well as in visual arts (70%) and theatre (70%).[51] This compares to 15% of England's workforce overall.

The precarious nature of this kind of employment is likely to be difficult for those from lower income families, as there is a lack of security for a stable

[45] Cullinane, C. and Montacute, R. (2018). *Pay As You Go?* Sutton Trust. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/internships-pay-as-you-go/
[46] Brook, O., O'Brien, D., and Taylor, M. (2020). "There's No Way That You Get Paid to Do the Arts": Unpaid Labour Across the Cultural and Creative Life Course. *Sociological Research Online*, 25 (4), 571-588. Available at: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1360780419895291
[47] Brook, O. et al. (2023). Social Mobility and 'Openness' in Creative Occupations since the 1970s. Sociology, 57 (4), 789-810. Available at: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00380385221129953#fn8-00380385221129953
[48] Cullinane, C. and Montacute, R. (2018). *Pay As You Go?* Sutton Trust. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/internships-pay-as-you-go/
[49] Easton, E. and Becket, B. (2021). *Freelancers in the Creative Industries*. Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/policy-briefings/freelancers-in-the-creative-industries
[50] Easton, E. and Cauldwell-French, E. (2017). *Creative Freelancers*. Creative Industries Federation. Available at: https://www.creativeindustriesfederation.com/sites/default/files/2017-07/Creative%20Freelancers%201.0.pdf
[51] Easton, E. and Becket, B. (2021). *Freelancers in the Creative Industries*. Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/policy-briefings/freelancers-in-the-creative-industries

income, (particularly when contracts are short).[52] Finding roles as a freelancer is also more difficult for those without have a strong network of others working in the industry.[53]

Having parents who work in the creative industries also means young people have a source of advice on career paths. Having parents that work and-or are interested in creative hobbies, such as galleries and the theatre, is associated with a higher likelihood of doing such activities as a child through after-school clubs or days out. In 2018, the Sutton Trust found 84% of young people from professional households took part in at least one extra-curricular activity compared to 45% of those from the least affluent households. This reflects cultural capital, but also financial resources in the home – while 25% of those from the least affluent homes took part in a free activity, 20% from the most affluent did.[54]

Academics have suggested that this may be contributing to why those from more affluent backgrounds are more likely to be judged as a 'cultural match' by interviewers when applying for roles in the creative sector.[55] Engaging with cultural activities and gaining insight into how certain creative professions work through family and friends can also influence development of soft skills, which in turn impacts on someone's employability skills when going into a creative field.[56]

Contrastingly, parents outside of creative industries may also be concerned that a creative career is not a financially viable option, given the highly competitive nature of the sector. Indeed, national polling commissioned by Netflix found that 89% of working-class parents would advise their children against trying to work in film or television, because they do not see it as a viable career.[57]

[52] Easton, E. and Cauldwell-French, E. (2017). *Creative Freelancers*. Creative Industries Federation. Available at: https://www.creativeindustriesfederation.com/sites/default/files/2017-07/Creative%20Freelancers%201.0.pdf

[53] Carey, H., O'Brien, D., and Gable, O. (2021). *Social mobility in the Creative Economy Rebuilding and levelling up?* Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/research-reports/social-mobility-in-the-creative-economy-rebuilding-and-levelling-up

[54] Montacute, R. and Cullinane, C. (2018). *Parent Power 2018*. Sutton Trust. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/parent-power-2018-schools/

[55] Brook, O., O'Brien, D., and Taylor, M. (2020). *Culture is bad for you*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

[56] Rivera, L. (2015). *Pedigree: How elite students get elite jobs*. Princeton University Press.

[57] Netflix. (2024, September 4). *Netflix and National Youth Theatre Announce Second Year of IGNITE as New Research Reveals 'Creative Class Chasm'*. About Netflix. Available at: https://about.netflix.com/en/news/netflix-and-NYT-launch-second-year-of-IGNITE

Having guidance and links to a creative field through parents is one example of *who* you know being as important as *what* you know. Many roles in the creative industries are shared by networks of professionals in each industry, which those from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to be excluded from, as they do not have any existing connections to their desired industry.[58]

In summary, existing research shows that there is a class ceiling in the creative industries which, concerningly, has existed for decades with limited progress in narrowing access gaps. It is clear that going to university is a vital stepping stone for accessing creative industries, but for someone from a poor socio-economic background, barriers continue to be in the way. From not being able to afford music lessons as a child to being unable to choose creative subjects at GCSE and A Level as a school doesn't offer them, obstacles to a creative education and career are visible across a young person's life, not just post-18.

This report has an important opportunity to build on previous work and will provide a more detailed picture to the research space using more recent data, covering who is getting onto creative undergraduate courses and where are they heading after graduation, particularly covering the experiences of socio-economically disadvantaged students.

[58] Lee, D. (2013). *Creative Networks and Social Capital*. In: Cultural Work and Higher Education. Palgrave Macmillan, London. Available at: https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9781137013941_10

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THE SUTTON TRUST

The role of higher education in class inequalities in the cultural and creative industries

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Introduction

Creative industries and creative occupations are marked by significant inequalities. There is a longstanding consensus in the academic literature that gender, race and ethnicity, disability, social class, and geographical location are all important to who gets in, and who gets on, in the creative sector. Many of these inequalities have their roots in the education system.

High proportions of the creative workforce are educated to degree level.[59] These proportions are much higher than average in the rest of the economy. Particular sub-sectors of creative industries have some of the highest proportions of workers with degrees.[60]

"Access to higher education is crucial as the dominant route into the creative economy, and has been so for a long time."

Not all these creative workers have 'creative' degrees.[61] Nevertheless, access to HE is crucial as the dominant route into the creative economy, and has been so for a long time.[62] A recent report by the APPG for Creative Diversity noted, "*a degree will not guarantee an individual a job in the creative industries; but an individual is unlikely to get a creative industries job without a degree*".[63]

High proportions of works with degree level education are a good thing for the creative sector. Degrees provide a huge range of social value, as well as direct skills and training for creative jobs. However, access to HE is itself unequal.[64] The UK has a highly unequal education system.[65] This highly

[59] Oakley, K. *et al.* (2017). Cultural Capital: Arts Graduates, Spatial Inequality, and London's Impact on Cultural Labor Markets. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *61*(12), 1510-1531.
[60] Comunian, R., Dent, T. and Kim, S. (2022). Creative workforce: understanding skills & training needs in the CCIs; Inequalities and Exclusion Report. A DISCE publication. DISCED3.3-updated.pdf
[61] Comunian, R., Faggian, A., and Li, Q.C. (2010). Unrewarded careers in the creative class: The strange case of bohemian graduates. *Papers in Regional Science*, 89 (2), 389-410. Available at: https://rsaiconnect.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1435-5957.2010.00281.x
[62] Lee, N. and Drever, E. (2013). The Creative Industries, Creative Occupations and Innovation in London. *European Planning Studies*, 21 (12), 1977-1997. Available at: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09654313.2012.722969
Marrocu, E. and Paci, R. (2012). Education or creativity: What matters most for economic performance? *Economic Geography*, 88 (4), 369–401.
[63] Comunian, R. *et al.* (2023). *Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category*. APPG for Creative Diversity. Available at: www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education
[64] Montacute, R. and Culinane, C. (2023). *25 Years of University Access*. Sutton Trust. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/25-years-of-university-access/
[65] Farquharson, C., McNally, S., and Tahir, I. (2022). *Inequality: the IFS Deaton Review: Education Inequalities*. Institute for Fiscal Studies. Available at: https://ifs.org.uk/inequality/education-inequalities/

unequal education system is one, but not the only, factor underpinning inequality in the creative economy.

The importance of education to inequalities in the creative economy is the starting point for this report. The report builds on recent work examining social mobility and social class inequalities in creative industries, and recent work on equity, diversity and inclusion in creative HE.

Context and scope

What are the inequalities in the cultural and creative industries?

There is an extensive, and longstanding, literature on inequalities in cultural and creative industries.[66] This research, both in the UK and globally, shows a creative sector marked by profound divides in terms of gender,[67] race and ethnicity,[68] social class,[69] and disability.[70]

We know that these demographic inequalities are difficult to separate from working conditions and pay, workers' wellbeing, career insecurities, and job security.[71] Much of the literature is focused on the uneven distribution of 'good' work in the sector. This is a problem for both freelancers and for those in more secure forms of employment. Indeed, even where individuals do have more secure roles, pay can be very low. Where pay may be high for some freelancers, the lack of defined career paths is an issue for career development.[72] Both of these dynamics are important factors in shaping the demographics of the workforce.

There are also broader structural factors. The uneven geography of the creative economy in the UK plays an important role. There are 'clusters' of creative industries all across the UK.[73] However, London (31% of creative industries employment and 34% of creative industries businesses), and the Greater South East of England including London (54% of creative

[66] Brook, O., O'Brien, D., and Taylor, M. (2020). *Culture is bad for you* Manchester: Manchester University Press

[67] For instance, see: Conor, B., Gill, R., and Taylor, S. (2015). *Gender and Creative Labour*. London: Wiley-Blackwell.

[68] Saha, A. (2017). *Race and the cultural industries.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

[69] O'Brien, D. *et al.* (2016) 'Are the creative industries meritocratic? An analysis of the 2014 British Labour Force Survey'. *Cultural Trends*, 25 (2), 116–131. Available at: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09548963.2016.1170943

[70] Randle, K. and Hardy, K. (2017). 'Macho, mobile and resilient? How workers with impairments are doubly disabled in project-based film and television work'. *Work, Employment and Society*, 31(3), 447–464.

[71] For a summary see: Brook, O., O'Brien, D., and Taylor, M. (2020). *Culture is bad for you* Manchester: Manchester University Press

[72] Carey, H., Giles, L., and O'Brien, D. (2023). *Job quality in the Creative Industries The final report from the Creative PEC's Good Work Review*. Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre and Work Advance. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/research_report_entr/good-work-review/

[73] Seipel, J., Ramirez-Guerra, A., and Rathi, S. (2023) *State of the Nations: Geographies of Creativity.* Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, Newcastle University and RSA. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/state_of_the_nation/geographies-of-creativity/

industries employment and 62% of creative industries business) are where a significant proportion of both creative industries and jobs are based.[74]

The characteristics of work and labour markets in the sector do not fully account for the under-representations of some demographic groups and the overrepresentation of others. The academic literature has charted significant levels, and specific incidents, of discrimination associated with sexism, racism, ageism, classism, and ableism. Academics have pointed to a specific 'norm' of a white middle-class man dominating the sector.

This 'norm' is present even in cultural industries and occupations that might have more women than men in the overall workforce; might have more ethnic and racial diversity in particular organisations; may have histories of positive environments for disabled people; or have better representations of those from working-class origins in specific parts of the UK.[75]

The most recent analysis of the makeup of the workforce comes from McAndrew et al (2024), drawing data from the Office for National Statistics' Labour Force Survey.[76] They cluster a range of cultural and creative occupations together into four broad sectors:

- Film, television, video, radio & photography, which includes managers and directors in the creative industries and photographers, audio-visual and broadcasting equipment operators

- Publishing, which includes newspaper and periodical editors, newspaper and periodical journalists and reporters, authors, writers and translators

- Museums, libraries and archives, which includes librarians and archivists and curators

[74] Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre. (2022). *National statistics on the creative industries*. PEC. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/news_entries/national-statistics-on-the-creative-industries/

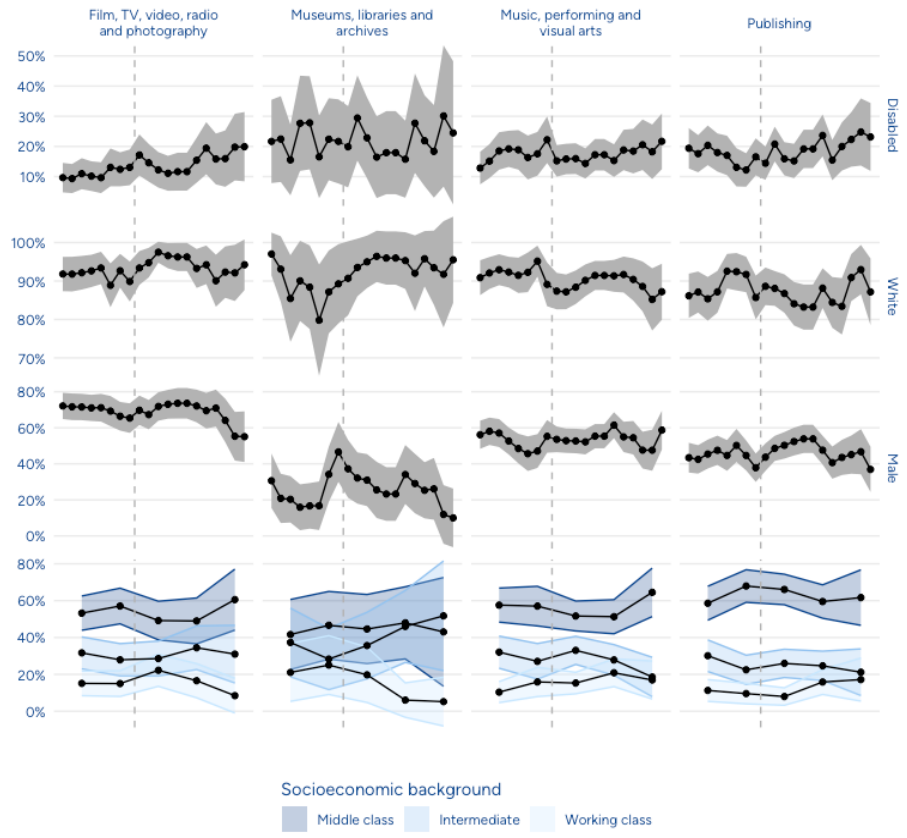
[75] These issues are summarised in Brook, O., O'Brien, D., and Taylor, M. (2020). *Culture is bad for you.* Manchester: Manchester University Press

[76] McAndrew, S. *et al.* (2024). *State of the Nation: Arts, Culture and Heritage: Audiences and Workforce*. Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, Newcastle University and RSA. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/state_of_the_nation/arts-cultural-heritage-audiences-and-workforce/

- Music, performing, and visual arts, which includes artists, actors, entertainers and presenters, dancers and choreographers, musicians and arts officers, producers and directors.

Figure 1, redrawn from McAndrew et al (2024) shows the trends in proportions of men, disabled people, white people in these 4 key sets of occupations since 2019. It also shows the proportions of three sets of social origins- routine/manual, intermediate, and professional/managerial. In media and public discussions these are usually referred to as working, intermediate, and middle-class social origins.

Figure 1: Proportions of creative workers by gender, disability, ethnicity and social class background



Source: Redrawn for McAndrew et al, 2024

We are presenting McAndrew et al (2024)'s analysis of gender, ethnicity, and disability to contextualise this paper's focus on social class. Social class is by no means the only aspect of inequality in the creative sector.

Figure 1 shows how the proportion of disabled people has been relatively stable in all four sets of occupations, albeit with the most variation year on year shown in museums and galleries, caused in part by the smaller number of employees in these occupations.

Proportions of film, TV, video, radio and photography increased, but there is significant uncertainty around these estimates.

Proportions of White people have seen similar stability, around 90% of these occupations. These figures are higher than the workforce in general, which is around 85%.

There have been changes in the proportions of men and women in creative occupations. These changes are connected to broader gender inequalities. While recently a higher proportion of women have been working in film occupations, the proportions are still low; gender balance in museums has receded post-COVID. It is also notable that the dominance of women in this sector has not translated into high profile leadership roles in the sector.[77]

The class composition of key creative occupations shows the social mobility crisis in the sector. Across all four occupational groups we see low levels of those from routine and manual (working-class) social origins. These low levels are mirrored by the high proportions from professional and managerial (middle-class) social origins.

Across all four sets of occupations around 60% are from middle-class social origins. This is a significantly greater proportion than the workforce as a whole (43%). More worryingly, recent years have seen higher proportions of workers from these origins in film, TV, video, radio and photography occupations and in music, performing and visual arts occupations, with lower proportions than the around 30% of the workforce as a whole from working-class backgrounds.

The most recent data, for 2023, suggests film, TV, video, radio and photography occupations had just 8% of workers from working-class

[77] Gilmore, A., O'Brien, D. and Walmsley, B. (eds). (2024). *Pandemic Culture*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

social origins. Music, performing and visual arts just 17%. The class crisis in the workforce is clear.[78]

Why does higher education matter?

Our starting point for the analysis is recent research by the Creative Diversity APPG in its *Making the Creative Majority* report.[79] That work synthesised a huge range of materials on creative HE, examining both its importance to inequalities in the creative economy, as well as inequalities in creative HE itself.

It is not necessary to offer the same level of detailed context as in *Making the Creative Majority*. However, some key points from both that report and the broader literature are important to understand why HE matters for inequalities in the creative economy.

The report's analysis of 2021 census data is clear: those with degree level qualifications dominate creative occupations and creative industries. Over 70% of workers in most creative occupations have a degree. Creative occupations do not have the same high levels of degree holders as medicine (96%), teaching (93%) and legal professionals (92%). Yet they still have some of the highest proportions of any occupation in the economy: Architects and associated professions (73%, Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) 245); artistic, literary and media occupations (71%, SOC 341); design occupations (71%, SOC 342); librarians and related professionals (82%, SOC 247); media professionals (82%, SOC 249); and web and multimedia design professionals (75%, SOC 214). SOC codes for creative occupations can be found in Appendix C Table C.4.

There are similarly high proportions in creative *industries*. Advertising and market research (72%); computer programming, consultancy and related activities (68%); creative, arts and entertainment activities (68%); libraries, archives, museums and other cultural activities (65%); motion picture, video and television production, sound recording and music publishing activities (68%); programming and broadcasting activities (71%); and publishing activities (73%) all have high proportions of workers with

[78] McAndrew, S. *et al.* (2024). *State of the Nation: Arts, Culture and Heritage: Audiences and Workforce.* Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, Newcastle University and RSA. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/state_of_the_nation/arts-cultural-heritage-audiences-and-workforce/

[79] Comunian, R. *et al.* (2023). *Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category.* APPG for Creative Diversity. Available at: www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education

degrees. Indeed, these proportions are some of the highest of any industrial sector.

These broad patterns are more acute for specific occupations, specific places, and younger age groups. For example, amongst media professionals, 92% of younger (aged 25-34) media professionals working in London have a degree.

The 2021 census reinforces what is well established already in the research literature: degree-level qualifications are a core element of the creative economy.[80] Not all these creative workers will have 'creative' degrees.[81] Nevertheless, access to HE is crucial as the dominant route into the creative economy. Indeed, as Comunian et al's APPG report comments, "a degree will not guarantee an individual a job in the creative industries; but an individual is unlikely to get a creative industries job without a degree".[82]

In this report we are focusing on creative degrees. *Making the Creative Majority* also provided a wealth of data and analysis on that specific subsection of higher education courses. There are two sets of context that are important for the present analysis. First, entry to creative HE courses, and second, analysis of HESA data during the years before the pandemic.

UCAS data from 2022 analysed by Comunian et al (2023) shows the majority of entrants into creative courses are women. Those from minoritised ethnic backgrounds are underrepresented. Managerial and professional (middle-class) origin individuals make up over half of all applications, offers, and acceptances on creative courses.

These under-representations vary by type of institution. For example, in the Russell Group Black students had smaller proportions of applications, offers, and acceptances to creative courses than at post-92 institutions. As we will see in our subsequent analysis, type of institution is crucial to understanding inequalities in creative higher education.

[80] Oakley, K. *et al.* (2017). Cultural Capital: Arts Graduates, Spatial Inequality, and London's Impact on Cultural Labor Markets. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *61* (12), 1510-1531.
[81] Comunian, R., Faggian, A., and Li, Q.C. (2010). Unrewarded careers in the creative class: The strange case of bohemian graduates. *Papers in Regional Science*, 89 (2), 389-410. Available at: https://rsaiconnect.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1435-5957.2010.00281.x
[82] Comunian, R. *et al.* (2023). *Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category.* APPG for Creative Diversity. Available at: www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education

Before turning to that analysis, it is also worth considering Comunian et al's (2023) analysis of HESA's Student Records data from 2010-2017, and the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) data from 2017 and 2018. They found significant inequalities for both students on, and graduates of, creative HE courses.

There were gender inequalities. Women were less likely to have creative jobs compared to men, despite being the majority of students studying creative subjects. There were inequalities of ethnicity. Black and Asian students were less likely to study a creative subject at university, even when cohort, university attended, pre-university test scores and all other demographic characteristics were taken into account in the analysis.

They also found inequalities of socio-economic status (SES). Students with higher SES positions are more likely to be studying creative subjects than those with lower SES. Higher SES graduates also received better academic outcomes and are more likely to be employed. Comunian et al (2023) used 3 broad SES categories – high, medium and low – based on household occupation of the applicants. For our analysis of creative subjects in this report, we are able to offer much more fine-grained detailed analysis of the specific class categories that constituted the broad groupings in their analysis.

Methodology

We now turn to our analysis of more recent Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Student Records data. The data used in this report is derived from a Tailored Dataset provided by Jisc (enquiry number 281902). This is derived from HESA Student Record (excluding alternative providers) and HESA Graduate Outcome Survey Results, for the academic years 2017/2018 to 2021/2022 inclusive. The total population count is 9,601,180, although this figure includes individuals appearing more than once if they were registered in higher education programmes over multiple years. Overall, the population of students and recent graduates of creative programmes comprises 1,126,924 records, reflecting the fact that this includes individual students being included multiple times if they were registered or recent graduates in multiple years that our dataset covers. Within each of the years in question, the population of students and recent graduates of creative programmes varies from 220,078 (2017/18) to 226,181 (2021/22). The percentage of students and recent graduates on creative programmes in the overall sample is 9.5%.

Our analysis follows Jisc rounding and suppression rules. As we have included very few raw numbers, and those numbers we include are large, this primarily affects rules around cases where a percentage is based on 22 or fewer respondents. Any such percentages have not been included. Percentages are based on full-time equivalent students studying a particular subject. Students registered on a part-time single honours programme are weighted at the relevant fraction of an equivalent full-time student. Similarly, students registered on joint programmes are weighted with the fraction of their programme associated with a given discipline. This has required the removal of some categories due to small numbers: for example, due to the small sample size, data on students whose gender is neither male nor female is not included in the intersectional analysis by subject area. Although most variables used have not been transformed, there are three exceptions, explained in detail in Appendix A.

The other source of data used for original analysis in this report is the Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey (LFS). This work was undertaken in the Office for National Statistics Secure Research Service using data from ONS and other owners and does not imply the endorsement of the ONS or other data owners.

The LFS is the key source of labour market statistics, and it includes questions on respondents' education (and the subject of their undergraduate degree, if they have one) as well as their gender, age, and

other characteristics. While the HESA data includes *all* students, the LFS uses a sample of households in the UK: complex survey weighting ensures that the achieved sample matches the population on a range of characteristics. Four waves are conducted every year, with the third wave having questions about the occupations of respondents' parents, used to allocate them to a social class origin using the NS-SEC categorisation described above. Responses from the third wave each year between 2014 and 2022 were used, with an average sample of 85,000 total respondents per wave.

Creative workers are a relatively rare group, and this aggregation includes c.15,500 creative workers. This is a large enough sample to compare their educational backgrounds and other characteristics in detail. The information captured on their degree programme is understandably not as granular as in the HESA dataset, although we have used the same categorisation as in our analysis of HESA data. The exception is degrees related to computer games design, which are not specified in the LFS but subsumed under a broader category computer programming degrees, which it would be not appropriate to categorise as part of our list of creative degrees.

Analysis

The relationship between higher education and creative industries: evidence from the Labour Force Survey

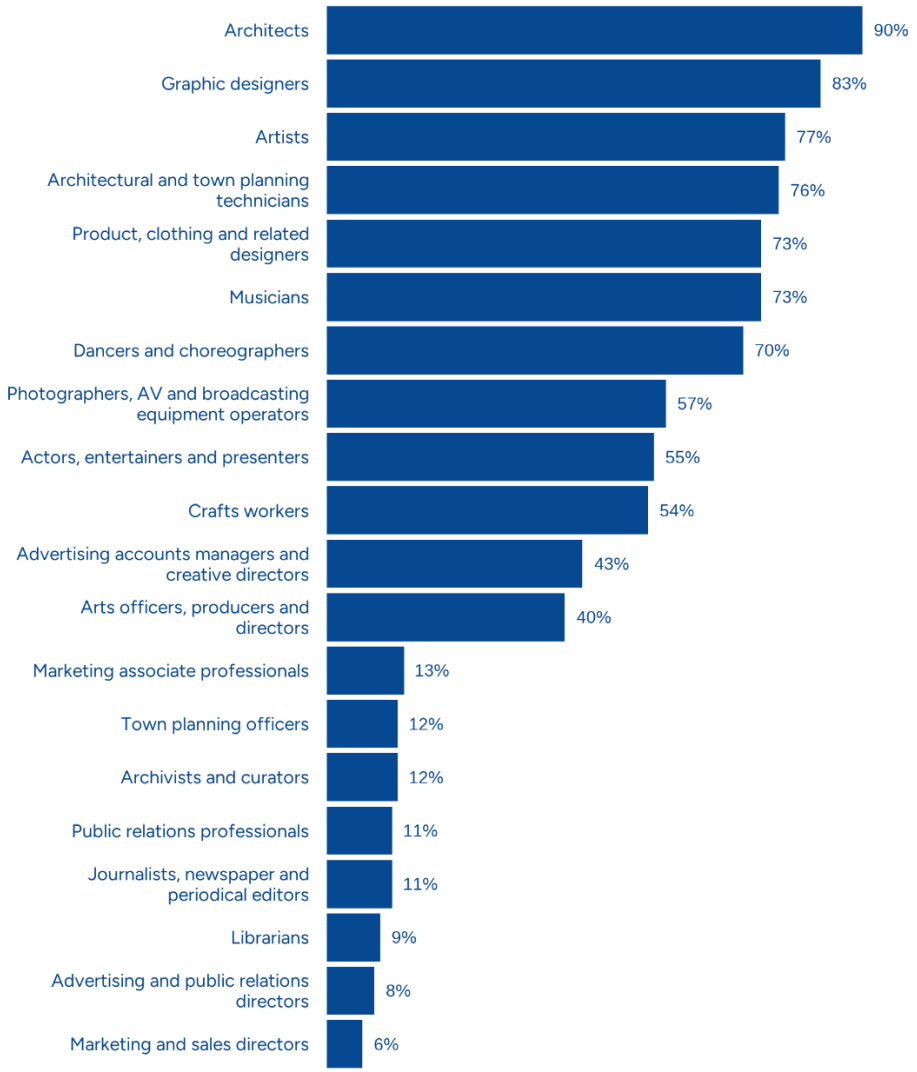
We already knew that having a degree is the strongest single predictor of entering creative work.[83] Media coverage of social inequalities in creative work has also noted the close connection between inequalities in HE and inequalities in the workforce. In this section we use analysis of the LFS to further explore the occupational destinations of creative graduates, and the educational qualifications of creative workers. This provides important context for the more detailed analysis of creative graduates presented in this report.

Degrees are central to the creative workforce. As many as 69% of people in key creative occupations (such as actors, dancers, artists, writers) have a degree, compared to 26% of the entire workforce.

Figure 2 looks at the types of degrees that creative workers have. On average, 37% of graduates in creative jobs have a creative degree, rising to 43% of those under 35. Again there are important variations: 89% of architects and 83% of graphic designers have creative degrees, compared to 6% of graduate marketing and sales directors and 6% of advertising and PR directors.

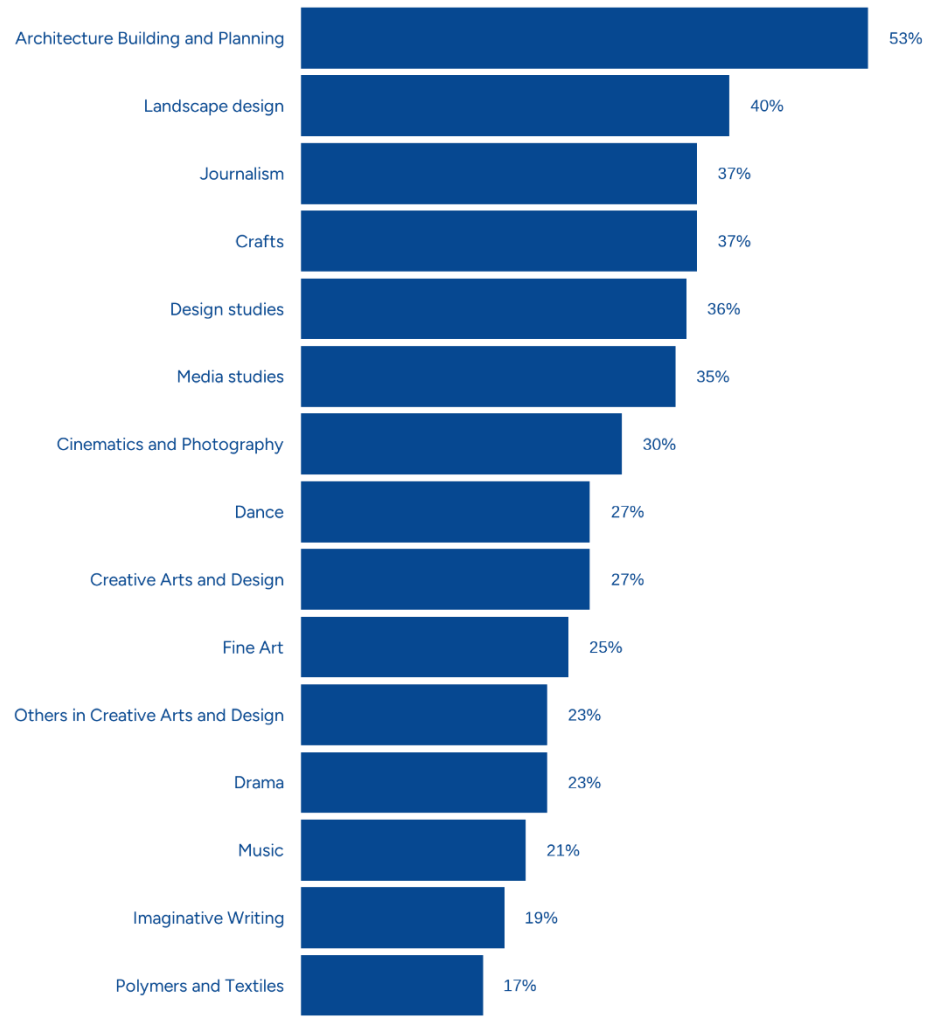
[83] Brook, O. *et al.* (2023). Social Mobility and 'Openness' in Creative Occupations since the 1970s. *Sociology*, *57* (4), 789-810. Available at: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00380385221129953#fn8-00380385221129953

Figure 2: Percentage of graduates in a creative occupation who hold a creative undergraduate degree



The LFS suggests that, on average, just under a third (31%) of creative graduates go into creative work. The highest proportion are students of architecture (53%) and landscape design (40%). Figures 2 and 3 suggest that creative degrees are an important route into creative work, and creative work is an important destination for creative graduates. However, this relationship is strongest for specific subjects and occupations, such as architecture, and weaker for more general creative subjects, such as art.

Figure 3: Percentage of graduates of each creative subject who hold a creative job



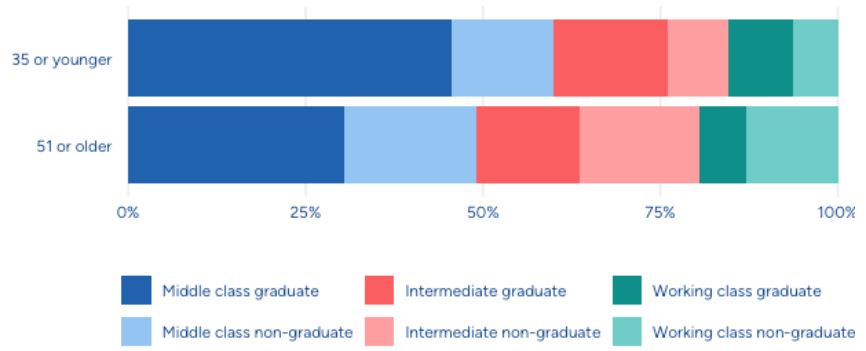
Access to higher education itself is highly socially stratified. Who gets a degree (and from where) is strongly associated with class. In recent years there have also been huge changes in the demographics of who accesses HE, as the sector has expanded. This means that, for younger cohorts, there is a substantial difference in the proportions of graduates, as well as the demographics, of workers in creative jobs.

Figure 4 reports LFS data from 2014-2022. It shows the percentage of creative workers under 35 compared to 51 and over, according to their HE status and social class background. It provides evidence of the patterns we might expect given what we know about the expansion of HE in the UK, and the changing class dynamics in the creative workforce.

There is a higher proportion of people from middle-class backgrounds in the younger creative workers compared to the older age group, and a higher proportion of graduates within this class. This means there are more middle-class origin graduate workers in the younger creative workers category.

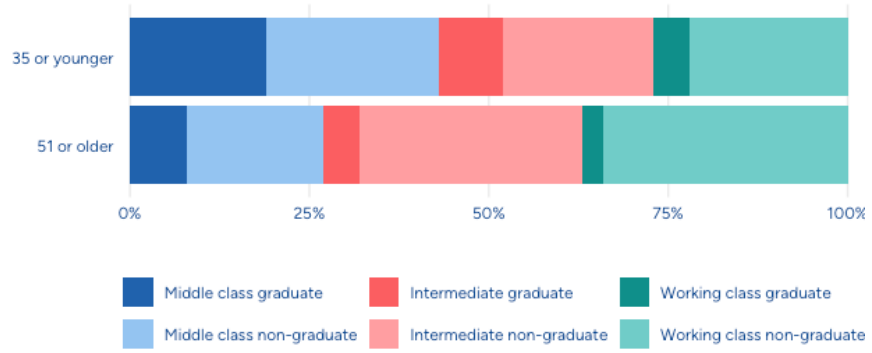
There are higher proportions of non-graduates in the older age group. Non-graduates make up half or more of the intermediate and working-class workers. Their proportions have reduced in the working-class and intermediate categories for younger workers, suggesting that having a degree has increased in importance for intermediate and working-class origin creative workers.

Figure 4: Social class of creative occupations, by age and HE status



These differences by class background, age and graduate status are more stark when compared to all workers (shown in Figure 5). The majority of people from all social class backgrounds are not graduates, even in the younger age group. Moreover, while the large majority of younger working-class origin creative workers are graduates, this is true of only a small proportion of younger working-class workers in general. Degrees, therefore, are an essential part of the creative workforce, irrespective of the class origin of the creative worker, but the increase in importance is greater in people who are not of middle-class origin.

Figure 5: Social class origins of all occupations, by age and HE status

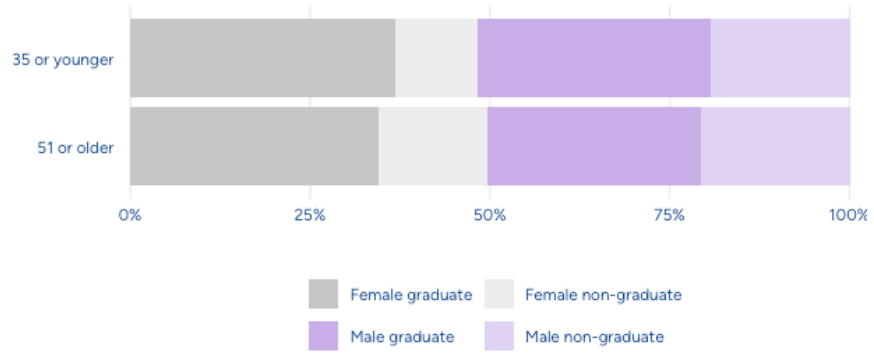


Gender

Repeating the above analysis by gender in Figure 6 we can see that about half of older men in creative work are graduates. For older women the majority are graduates. The high number of graduate female creative workers is notable given the relative absence of women in senior roles.

For younger creative workers, both men and women are more likely to be graduates than are older workers, but there is still a gender difference, with a higher proportion of female graduates than male. It is reasonable to conclude that having a degree is more important for female creative workers than for men.

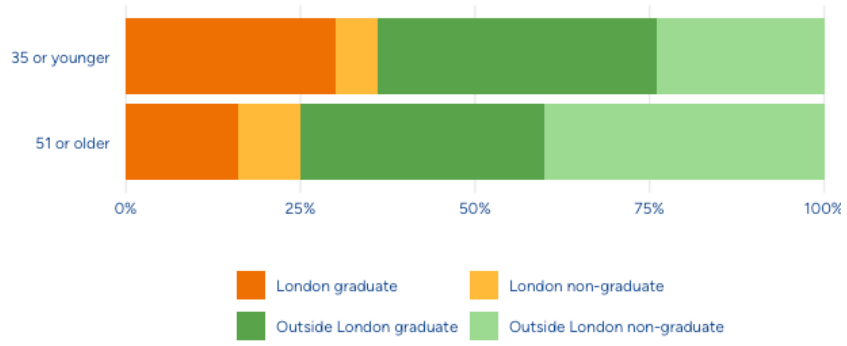
Figure 6: Gender of creative occupations, by age and HE status



Region

In Figure 7 we see that creative workers in London are more likely to be graduates, compared to those based elsewhere in the UK. This is the case for both older and younger workers.

Figure 7: Region of creative occupations, by age and HE status



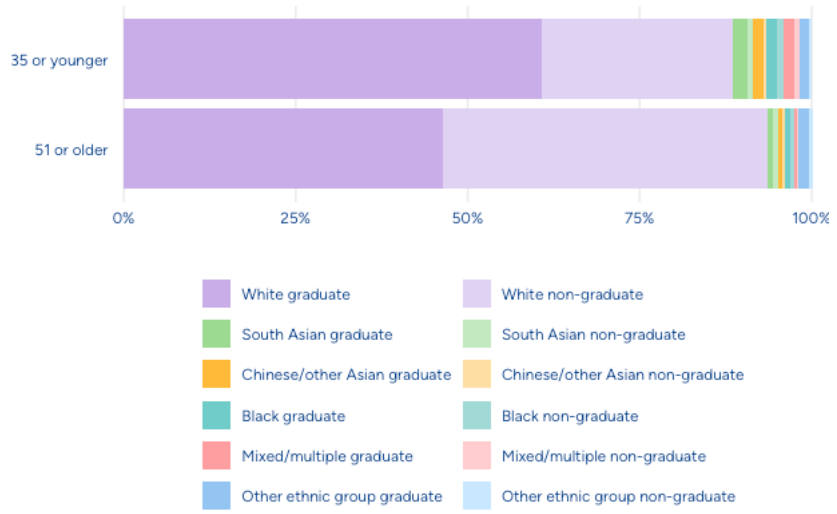
It appears that having a degree is more important if you want to get a creative job in London. This matters as people in creative work in London will have better access to employment opportunities and professional networks.

Ethnicity

The patterns for different ethnic groups are more varied. The proportion of creative workers identifying as White is higher in the older group than the younger- 94% compared to 88% (which is still very much higher than in the general population). The proportion of people from the minoritised ethnic groups is around twice as high in the younger cohort, except for the 'Other' group, with the largest increase for the 'Mixed/multiple' group. This approximately corresponds to changes in the overall population (Figure 8).

Creative workers over 50 are approximately as likely as not to be graduates, for most ethnic groups except mixed/multiple ethnicities and the 'Other' group. By contrast, creative workers aged up to 35 are approximately twice as likely to be graduates as not, if they are of White, Black/African/Caribbean or Mixed/multiple ethnicities. 'Other' ethnic groups are disproportionately more likely to be graduates. This will reflect differences in specific occupations, and in some cases more detailed ethnic group analysis might be revealing, but unfortunately the numbers for such analysis are too small to publish.

Figure 8: Ethnicity of creative occupations, by age and HE status



All of this analysis highlights that it is difficult to enter or remain in creative work without a degree. Moreover, in general the dominance of graduates is more pronounced in groups that are under-represented in the creative workforce. While having a degree is an advantage for all groups, it seems that it is less critical for white men from middle-class origins working in London, where their background and/or social networks are more likely to offer them an entry point (and the means to persist in this precarious career) even if they do not have degrees.

Who studies creative degrees?

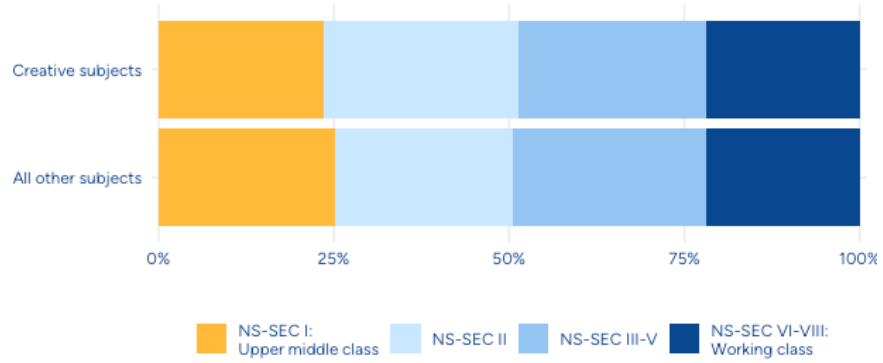
Social class origins

Our analysis begins with the class origins of all students in higher education, qualifiers, and graduates in the Graduate Outcomes survey in the academic years from 2017/18 to 2021/22 inclusive.

Figure 9 shows how across all subjects, at all universities, 25% of students are from NS-SEC I- higher professional and managerial, 'upper-middle-class'- social origins. 21% of all students are from NS-SEC VI-VIII- routine, manual or out of work, 'working-class'- social origins.

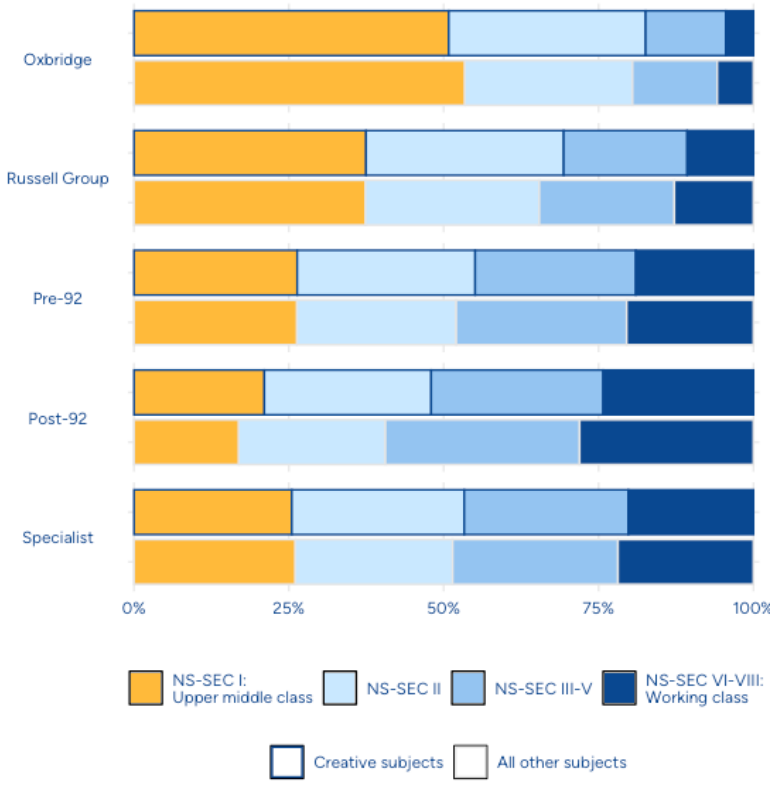
For creative subjects as a whole there is a higher proportion of students from upper-middle-class (24%) than working-class origin students (21%). Creative subjects have very slightly lower proportions of upper-middle-class origin students than the sector as a whole (compared with 25%), and around the same working-class origin students (compared with 22%).

Figure 9: Social class background of creative students and all other students



However, these general patterns contain substantial differences. We know, for example, that different types of institutions have different intakes. Figure 10 breaks these general patterns down by type of institution, comparing creative students with students on all other subjects.

Figure 10: Social class of creative students and all students by institution type



At Oxbridge and the Russell Group there is a huge imbalance between upper-middle-class social origins as compared with those from working-class' social origins. Upper-middle-class origin students are over a third (37%) of creative students at Russell Group institutions. Working-class origin students are just 11%.

For upper-middle-class origin students these class imbalances are broadly reflective of the general class inequalities in the UK's student population.[84] The proportions of upper-middle-class students studying creative subjects are generally in line with students as a whole.

One exception can be seen at post-92 institutions, where the percentage of students studying creative subjects from upper-middle-class backgrounds (21%) is higher than the percentage of students studying other subjects (17%). As we shall see, there are proportionally more students studying creative subjects at post-92 institutions than elsewhere – they form a larger proportion of students at these institutions, and a relatively large proportion of all creative students.

There is a stark contrast with working-class origin students. The proportions of working-class origin students studying creative subjects are lower than the equivalent figures for students studying all other subjects. The class crisis for working-class origin students is worse than the class inequalities in the student population as a whole. It is striking that even post-92 institutions, which have the highest proportions of creative students from working-class backgrounds (24%), still have a smaller proportion than all other courses (28%).

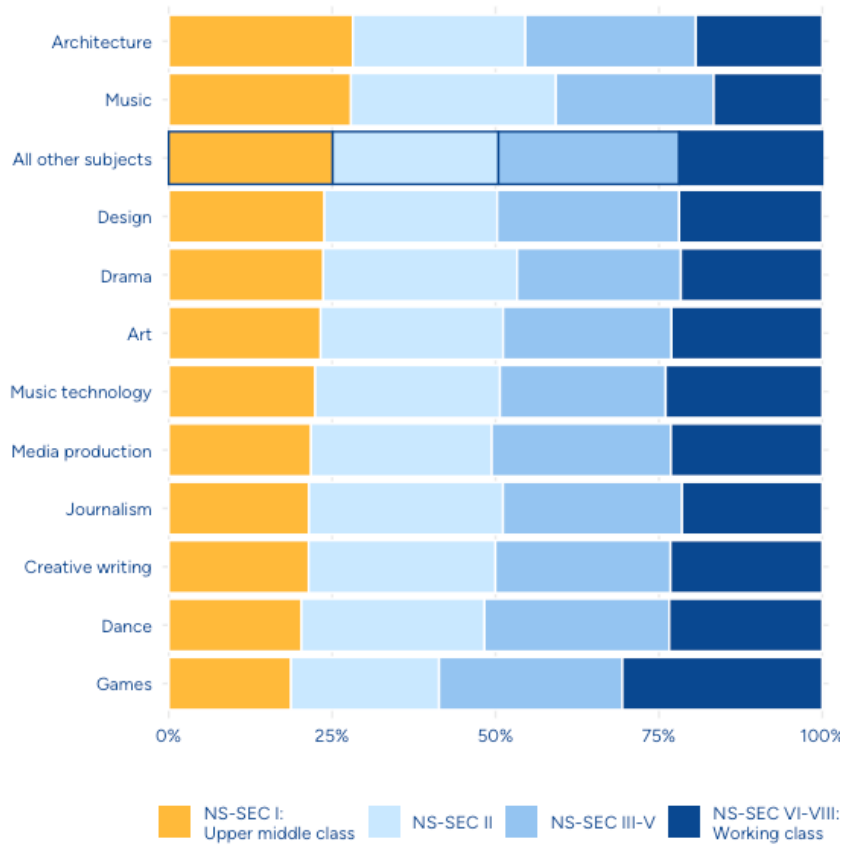
The specific type of creative course students are studying is, of course, crucial. Figure 11 shows individual creative courses and the proportions of upper-middle-class and working-class origin students.

All creative courses except Music and Architecture have fewer upper-middle-class origin students than non-creative courses, and have the same or greater proportions of students from working-class origins. Games courses, in particular, have a very high proportion of those from these working-class social origins.

[84] Comunian, R. *et al.* (2023). *Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category.* APPG for Creative Diversity. Available at: www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education

Overall, architecture is the subject with the largest percentage of students from upper-middle-class backgrounds at 28%, compared with 19% of students on games programmes. Music is the subject with the fewest students from working-class backgrounds - 16%, compared with 30% of Games students.

Figure 11: Creative subject groups by social class origin

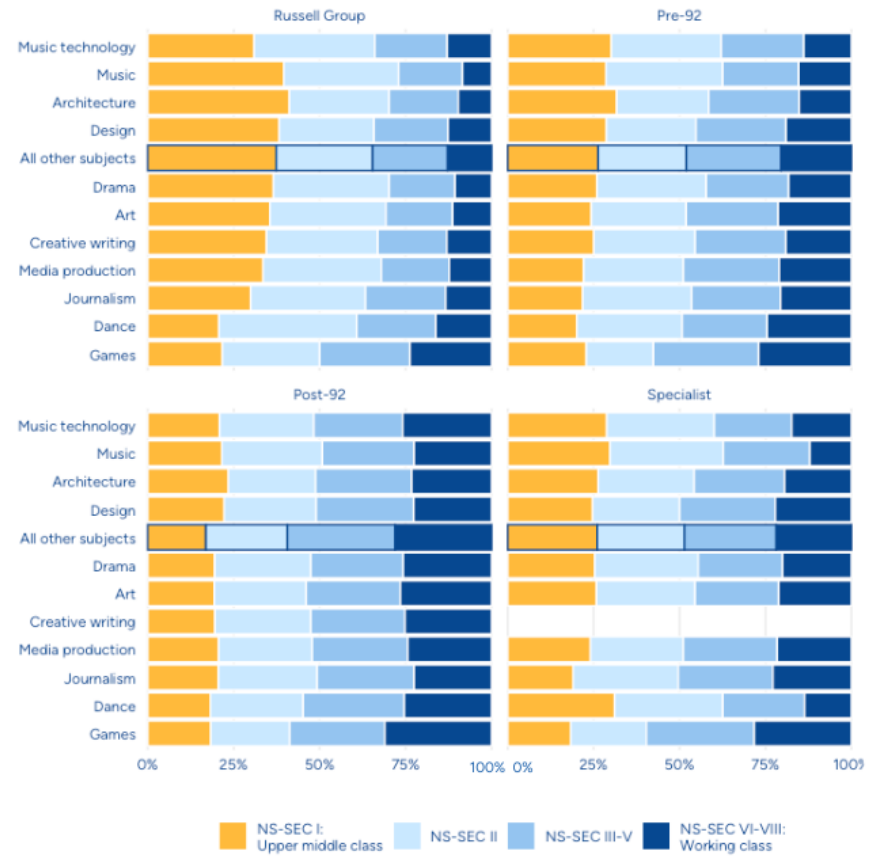


The class dynamics for specific subjects may seem to contrast with class composition for creative subjects as a whole. This is partially driven by the differences between types of higher education institutions.

Figure 12 shows the class origins for students by university type and subject area. For data suppression reasons, around the small numbers of students on the relevant programmes, we have grouped Oxbridge with the remainder of the Russell Group from Figure 12. Here, we can see the stratification of the creative HE courses. There are striking differences between the Russell Group and post-92 institutions, with very different proportions of both upper-middle-class and working-class studying creative subjects. Upper-middle-class origin students dominate Russell

Group creative courses; they are even overrepresented at post-92s as compared to all other subjects at these institutions.

Figure 12: Creative subject groups and institution type by class background



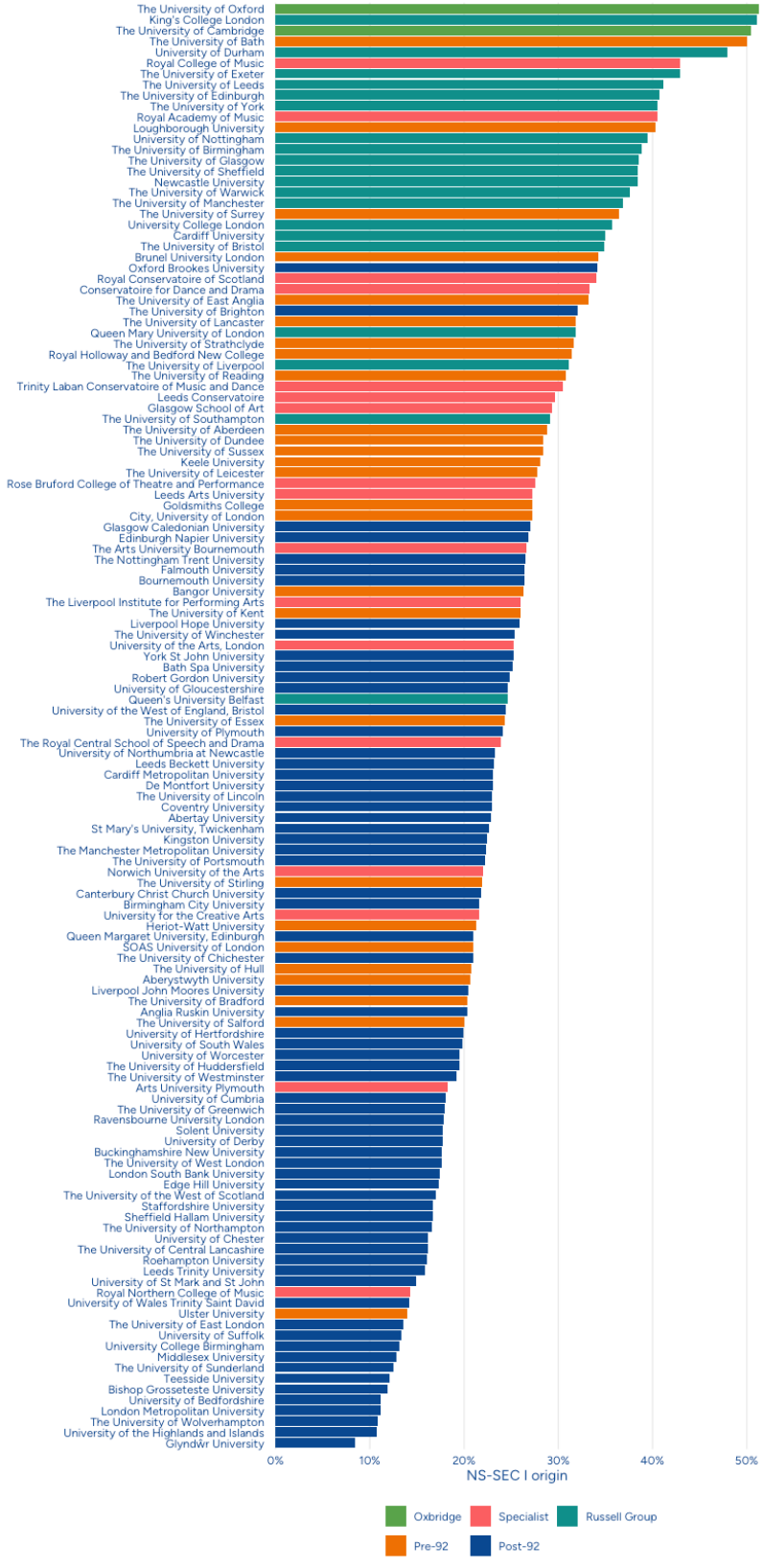
At the Russell Group, the proportions of students on key creative subjects - Art, Drama and Music - are lower than the already low proportions of working-class students at the Russell Group as a whole.

There is better news at the post-92 institutions, where most creative subjects have higher proportions of working-class students. However, even at post-92 institutions many creative courses see higher proportions of upper-middle-class origin students than non-creative subjects at these institutions.

The previous sections have shown the importance of understanding differences between types of universities, between creative subjects and the differences between subjects at different types of universities.

Just as with specific courses, there are a range of differences within general groupings of universities such as the Russell Group and the post-92s. Figure 13 visualises every university that offers creative courses, and charts the proportion of students from upper-middle-class social origins at each institution.

Figure 13: Individual HE institutions ranked by proportions of upper-middle-class origin creative students



The overall pattern is as we might expect, with lower proportions of upper-middle-class origin creative students at the post-92 institutions, and higher levels at Oxbridge and the Russell Group. Yet even within the Russell Group's creative students there are significantly different levels of upper-middle-class representation. The largest differences are among pre-92 institutions that are not members of the Russell Group.

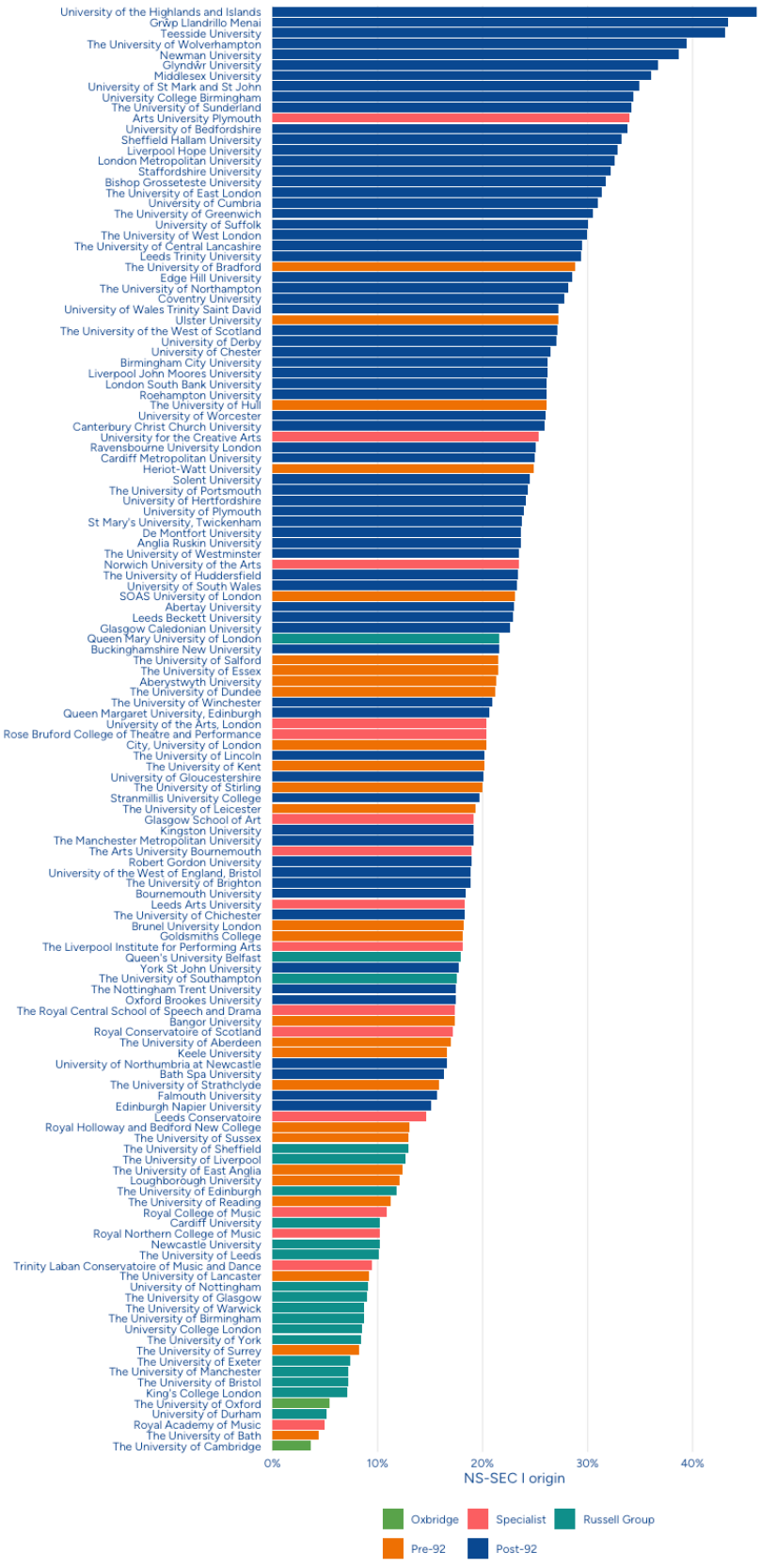
At four institutions – Oxford and Cambridge, and King's College London (Russell Group) and Bath (pre-92) – more than half of creative students come from upper-middle-class backgrounds. The Russell Group institutions with the largest percentages of upper-middle-class creative students are King's College London (51%), Durham (48%) and Exeter (43%). The smallest percentages of creative students from upper-middle-class backgrounds are Queen's University Belfast (25%), Southampton (29%) and Liverpool (31%).

The specialist institutions with the largest percentage of students from upper-middle-class backgrounds are the Royal College of Music (43%), Royal Academy of Music (41%), and Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (34%). On the other end of the scale are the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) (14%), Arts University Plymouth (18%) and University for the Creative Arts (UCA) (22%).

The post-92s with the largest percentage of students from upper-middle-class backgrounds are Oxford Brookes (34%), Brighton (32%) and Glasgow Caledonian University (27%). At the other end are Glyndŵr (8%), the University of the Highlands and Islands (11%), and Wolverhampton (11%).

Figure 14 shows the other side of these patterns, visualising all institutions offering creative degrees and the proportions of students from working-class backgrounds. The pattern is broadly reversed, with post-92 institutions having the highest proportions (University of the Highlands and Islands 46%; Teesside 43%; Wolverhampton 39%). Oxbridge (4% Cambridge, 5% Oxford), a specialist institution (Royal Academy of Music, 4%), the pre-92 sector (including the Russell Group) (Bath 4%, Bristol 7%, Manchester 7%) the fewest. (Data showing class origins of all creative subjects by university type can be found in Figure B.1, Appendix B).

Figure 14: Individual HE institutions ranked by proportions of working-class origin creative students

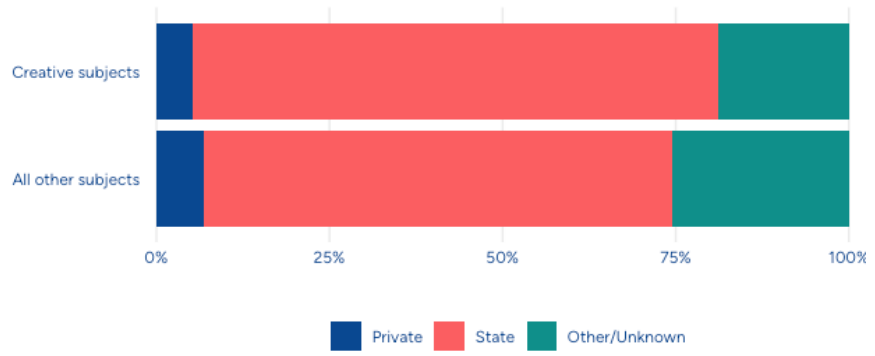


School type

Alongside social class, the type of school attended by students plays an important role in shaping inequalities in the creative economy. As the findings from the Sutton Trust elsewhere in this report show, fee paying or independent schools are hugely overrepresented in the highest profile areas of artistic and cultural success, such as BAFTA and Oscar winners or musicians with top 40 hit songs.

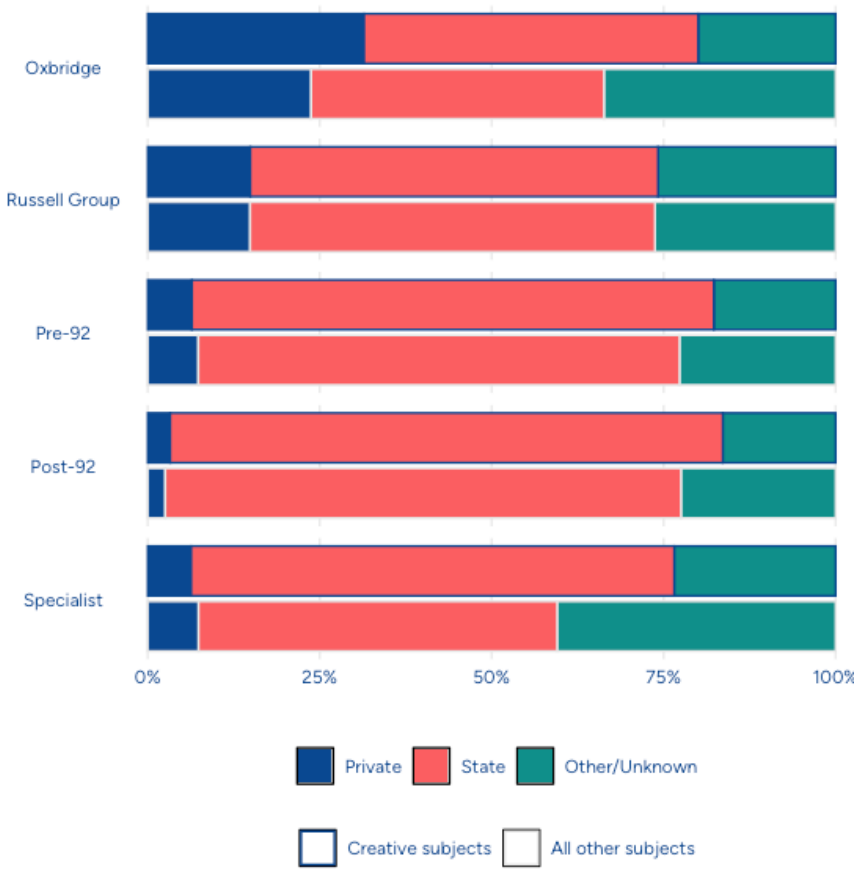
This section examines the data on school type and entry to creative HE courses. Our starting point is the overall proportions for all creative students and all other students. Figure 15 shows how creative courses have higher proportions of state educated students (around 76%) than all other subjects (68%), and a lower proportion (5%) of privately educated students than all other subjects (7%).

Figure 15: Type of school attended by creative students and all other students



However, as with social class, these overall proportions hide considerable differences and distinctive patterns between different types of university. Figure 16 shows the type of school attended by creative and all other subjects. The proportions are divided by different types of universities.

Figure 16: Type of school attended by creative students and all other students by institution type



It is important to be cautious about the proportions of other/unknown school type in this data. They are likely international students, but we do not know this for certain. That issue notwithstanding, we can make several observations about the impact of school type on creative HE courses.

The previous section sounded the alarm about the class crisis in creative HE. When looking at the type of school attended by creative HE students, the overall picture is more nuanced. Oxbridge (32%) and the Russell Group (15%) both have higher proportions than the population average of around 7% of students who attended fee-paying schools. For the remainder of the pre-92 sector the figure is the same at 7%; for specialist institutions the figure is 6%, and at post-92s it is 3%.

It is notable that for pre-92 and specialist institutions, the proportions of creative students from private schools are lower than for all subjects; at Oxbridge, pre-92, specialist and post-92 institutions creative courses there

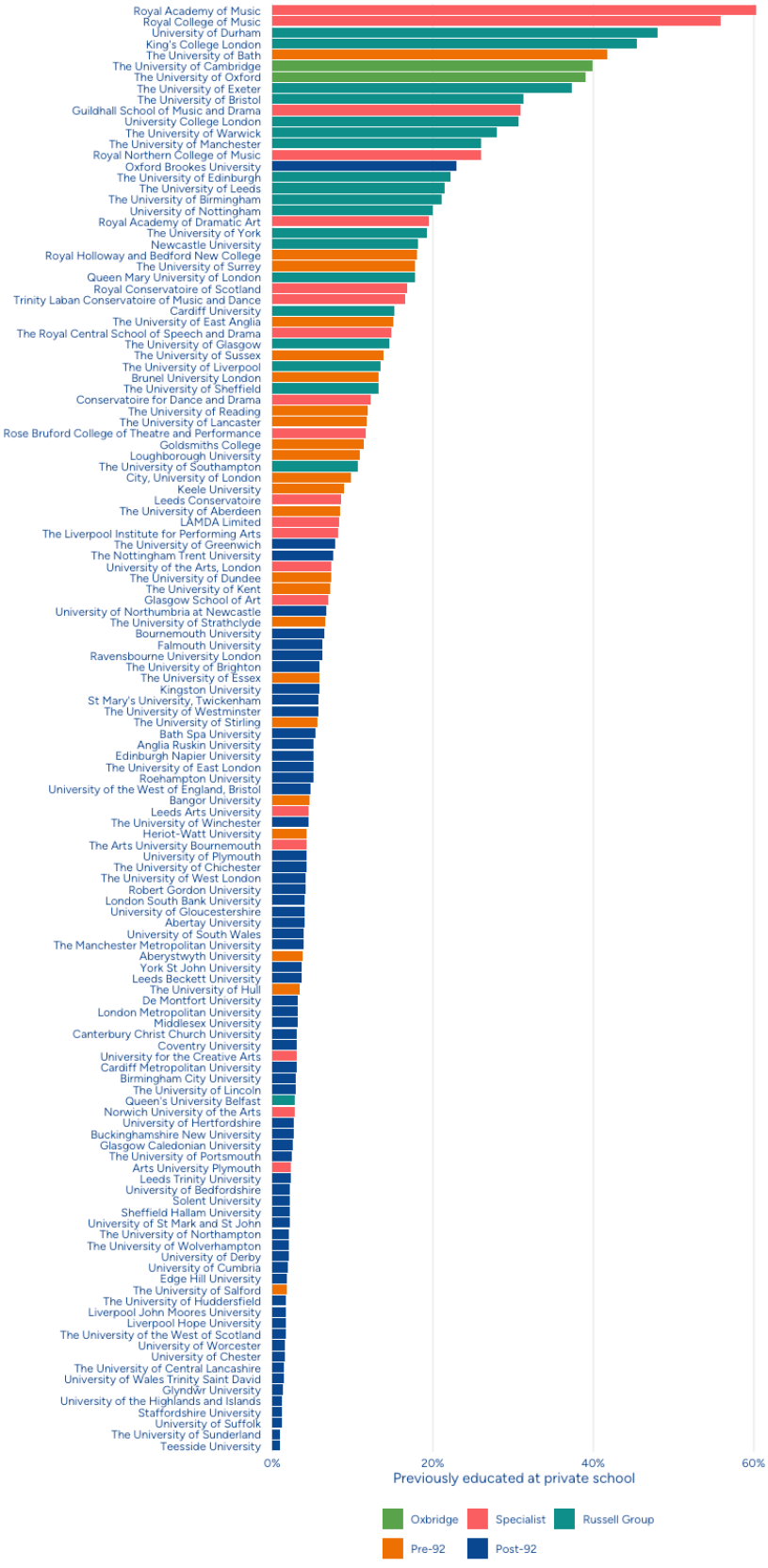
are higher proportions of students from state schools than all other subjects.

This is a different pattern as compared to class origins. While in the post-92 sector the percentage of students from upper-middle-class backgrounds significantly outstrips the percentage of students from working-class backgrounds, there is no imbalance in the case of private education.

At Oxbridge, there is a similar pattern; the balance of students from state and private schools is similar for creative subjects and all other subjects. The differences are explained by a smaller fraction of students studying creative subjects for whom data is not available. This likely reflects creative subjects having a higher proportion of privately educated students but a lower proportion of international students, but we cannot be sure of this as a result of the other/unknown category.

As with social origin, the percentages of students from private schools varies significantly within institutional types. Figure 17 presents data for every university offering creative HE courses. These percentage figures are of those for whom we have data. The “unknown/other” group has been removed.

Figure 17: Individual HE institutions ranked by proportions of creative students who attended private schools



The proportions of privately educated schools at specific universities shows the differences that are not fully captured by the overall figures for university groupings. 50 of 109 institutions within this dataset have more than 7% of students from private schools, which is the national average overall. However, the fact that just under half of institutions have a below-average percentage, which we would expect, masks significant variation. There are 14 institutions where the figure is greater than 25%, none of which is are a post-92. At two specialist institutions – the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music – more than half of students were previously privately educated.

From each group of university types, Cambridge has 40%, and Oxford 39% private school intake for their creative courses; Durham (48%), Kings College London (46%), and Exeter (37%) have the highest proportions from the Russell Group; Bath (42%), Royal Holloway and Surrey (both 18%) have the highest proportions from the non-Russell Group pre-92 universities; and Oxford Brookes (23%), Greenwich (8%) and Nottingham Trent (7%) have the highest proportions in the post-92 group.

Specialist creative institutions present a particularly complex picture. There are huge variations, for example University of Creative Arts has only 3% of its intake from private schools, whilst the Royal Academy of Music has 60%. Royal College of Music (56%) and Guildhall (31%) have very high proportions of privately educated students. On the one hand this reflects a whole range of longstanding issues related to access to music in the school system.[85] At the same time, it suggests significant inequalities associated with entry to the higher education institutions that are central to advanced music education in the UK.

We can see these issues associated with access to specific subjects in schools playing out in HE too. Individual subjects see a very wide range of proportions of state and private school students, as shown in Figure 18. Creative subjects generally have smaller percentages of privately educated students than other subjects.

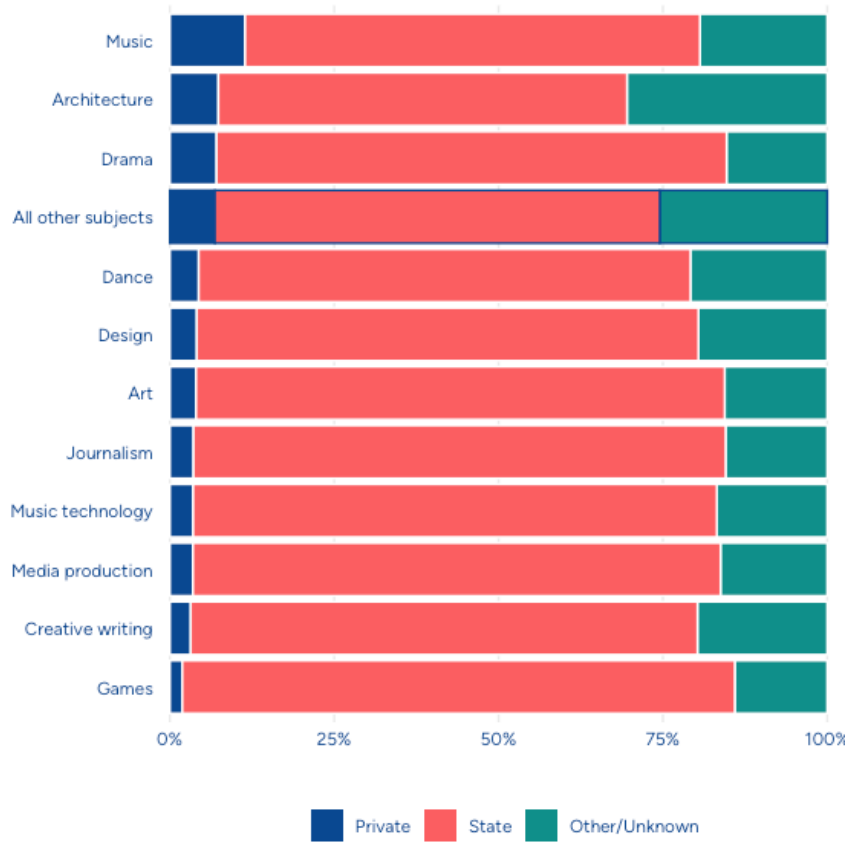
However, Music (11%) has a far larger percentage of privately educated students than any other creative subject. This proportion is also higher

[85] Daubney, A., Gary, S. and Deborah, A. (2019). *Music Education: State of the Nation*. Music Education, the Incorporated Society of Musicians and the University of Sussex. Available at: https://www.ism.org/images/images/State-of-the-Nation-Music-Education-WEB.pdf and Bull, A. (2024, under review). 'Gender Regimes in UK Music Higher Education: Quantitative Exploration of the Student and Staff Population' and Bath, N *et al.*.(2020.) 'The Declining Place of Music Education in Schools in England'. *Children & Society*, 34 (5), 443-457. Available at: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/chso.12386

than the average for all other students (7%). By contrast games (2%) has the lowest proportion of any creative subject, and is much lower than all other subjects too.

Music also has slightly higher proportions of students from state schools (69%), than all other subjects (68%). However, this 69% is lower than most other arts subjects. Only architecture (62%) has a lower proportion of state school students. The low levels of state school students in music is likely reflective of the small number of students (around 20%), compared with all other subjects, in the "Other/unknown" category in music, possibly reflecting at least in part a smaller number of international students studying music.

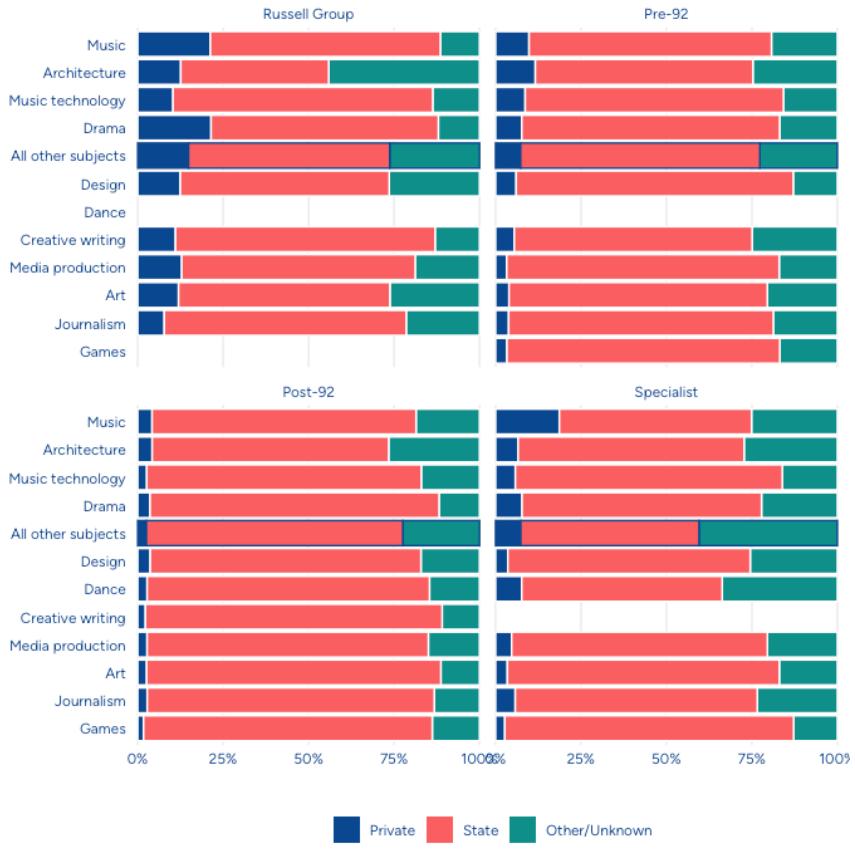
Figure 18: Creative subject groups and type of school attended



Inequalities become more apparent when we consider specific creative subjects by type of university. Figure 19 shows the proportions of type of school attended for specific creative subjects at our four different groups of institutions.

What is perhaps most interesting from Figure 19 is the proportion of private school pupils at post-92 institutions. Whilst for all subjects these proportions are lower than all other university types, specific creative subjects, including two of our three case study subjects Music and Drama (both 4%), still see higher proportions than all other subjects in post-92s (2%).

Figure 19: University type, creative subject and type of school attended



This analysis raises an important question as to the relationship between the overrepresentation of those from private schools in the most prestigious positions in creative industries, and the relatively lower proportions entering creative HE courses.

What about intersectionality? Three case studies of Art, Drama and Music

Previous sections have shown the broad patterns associated with class origins and type of school attended across creative subjects. We now look at an intersectional perspective, offering deep dives into three subjects: Art, Drama and Music.

For data protection reasons our deep dives cannot present the type of school attended for Art, Drama and Music at individual universities, nor the proportions of creative students from working-class origins at individual universities. There are also some institutions missing from the figures for those from upper-middle-class origins due to the small size of their cohorts.

We have chosen Art, Drama and Music for a variety of reasons, ranging from practitioner, media and public interest in these subjects, both in higher education and in schools;[86] the importance of these subjects as specific training routes for key occupations including artists; actors, writers and directors; and musicians (particularly classical musicians); and the relationship between these subjects and key areas of public funding for culture, such as theatres, galleries, orchestras and concert halls.

Our choice of these deep dives makes no judgement on the value or importance of other creative subject areas. For example, recent work by the British Academy (2024) has shown the importance of media studies and associated subjects to our economy and society.[87]

The overall figures for the class, ethnicity and gender of these three subjects are presented in table B.1 in Appendix B. The same demographics, but with type of school rather than social class, are in Appendix B, table B.2. These tables show the very low proportions of ethnic minority men and women in Art, Music and Drama, irrespective of their social class background. What is immediately striking is the very low levels of ethnic diversity in all three of our deep dive subjects. Clearly creative HE subjects have an ethnicity, as much as a class, crisis.

[86] Ashton, H. *et al.* (2024). *The state of the Arts*. Campaign for the Arts & Centre for Cultural and Media Policy Studies, University of Warwick. Available at: https://www.campaignforthearts.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/The-State-of-the-Arts.pdf

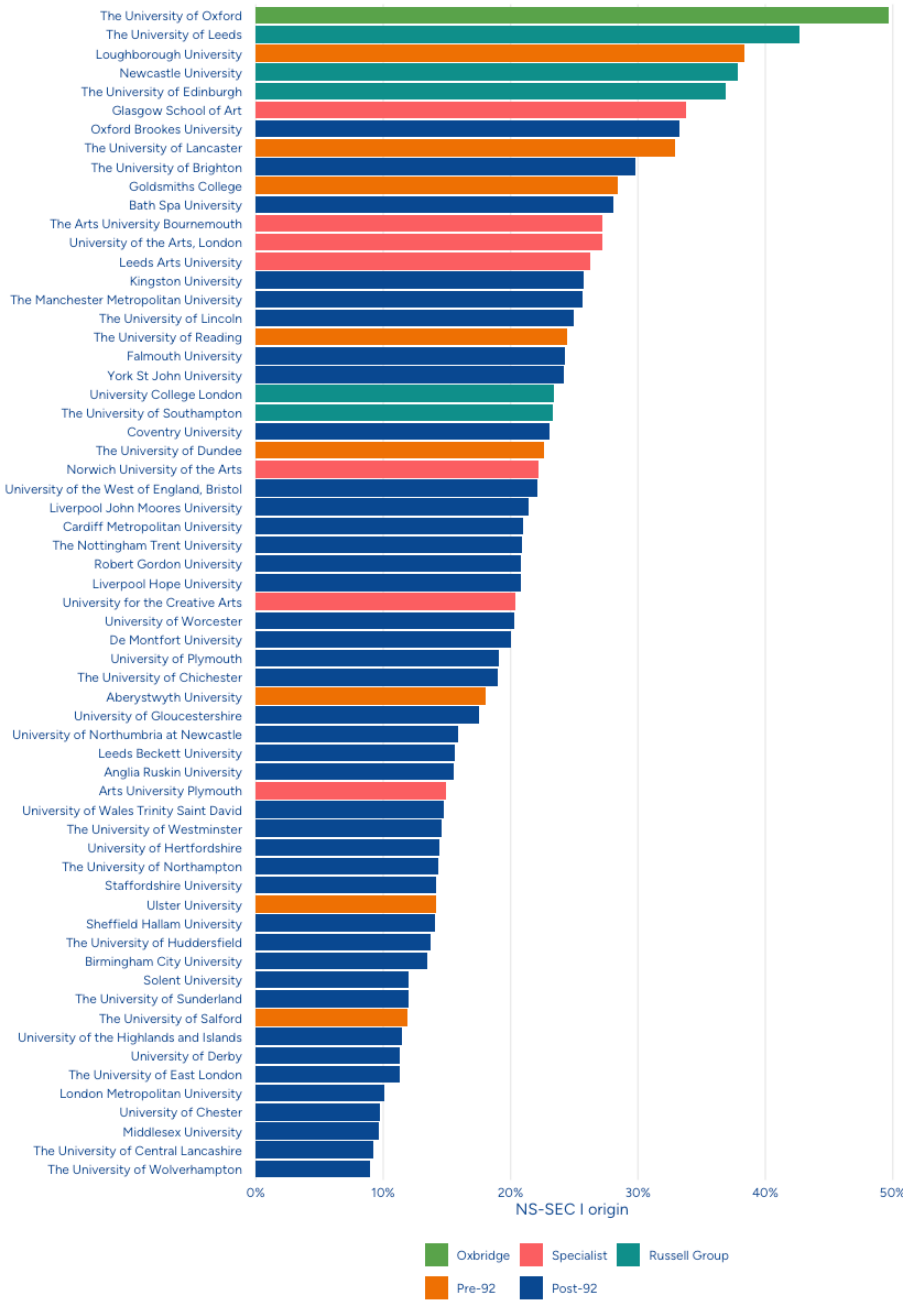
[87] British Academy. (2024). *Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies: Provision in UK Higher Education.* The British Academy. Available at: https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publications/media-screen-journalism-and-communication-studies-provision-in-uk-higher-education/

Art

Our deep dive begins by presenting class origin for all universities offering Art courses, shown in Figure 20. The contours of the landscape for undergraduate Art courses is immediately clear, with the absence of the Russell Group institutions.

We noted earlier how 25% of all students are from upper-middle-class backgrounds, with the average across Art slightly below this. Figure 20 shows that there are 17 institutions with higher proportions, and these are the most prestigious places. Unsurprisingly almost half of Oxford's Art students are from upper-middle-class origins, and Leeds, Newcastle and Edinburgh all have over a third from upper-middle-class origins too. Loughborough is perhaps the outlier as a pre-92 institution with almost 40% of its students from upper-middle-class origins.

Figure 20: Individual HE institutions ranked by proportions of Art students from upper-middle-class backgrounds



We look at Art in Figure 21. It shows the proportions of students studying Art by ethnicity, gender, upper-middle-class and working-class origins. Figure 22 presents the same information, but with school type rather than class origins. The scale for White students is separate, as they make up a much higher proportion of students studying these subjects.

We can also offer an intersectional perspective on these figures. We present the proportions for all students by class, gender and ethnicity in Figure 23. This also provides the comparison for our 'deep dives' on Drama and Music.

Whilst there are, proportionally, more working-class origin Asian, Black, Mixed and Other ethnicity students than their upper-middle-class origin counterparts, these proportions are still an extremely small part of Art students overall. Upper-middle-class origin White women are a large proportion, at 17%, of all Art students. This proportion is higher than all ethnicities put together, irrespective of their gender or class origin.

The story is similar with regard to the type of school attended. White, state-educated women are the highest proportion of Art students (61%) and the proportions of ethnic minorities are low.

Figure 21: Proportions of Art students by class, gender and ethnicity

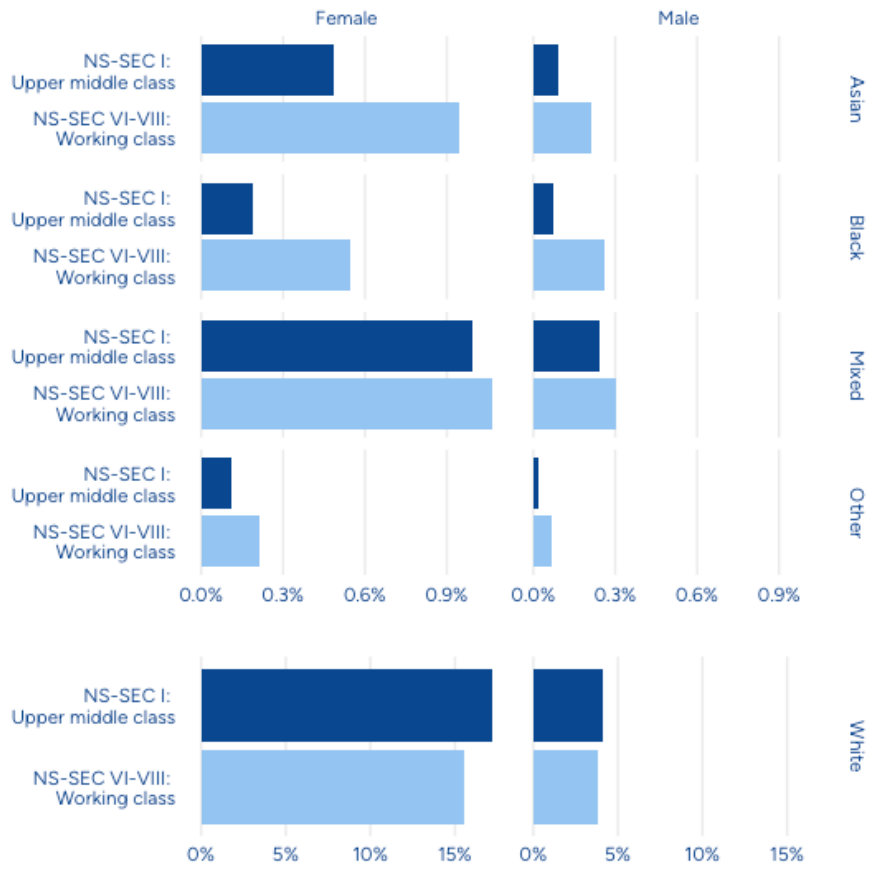


Figure 22: Proportions of Art students by school type, gender and ethnicity

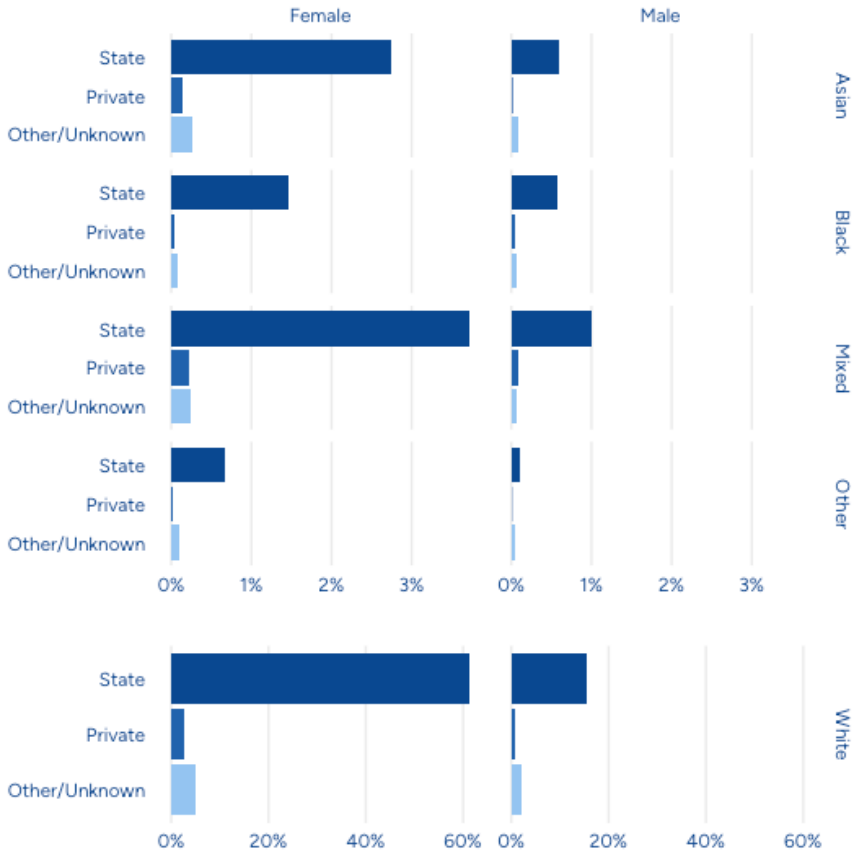
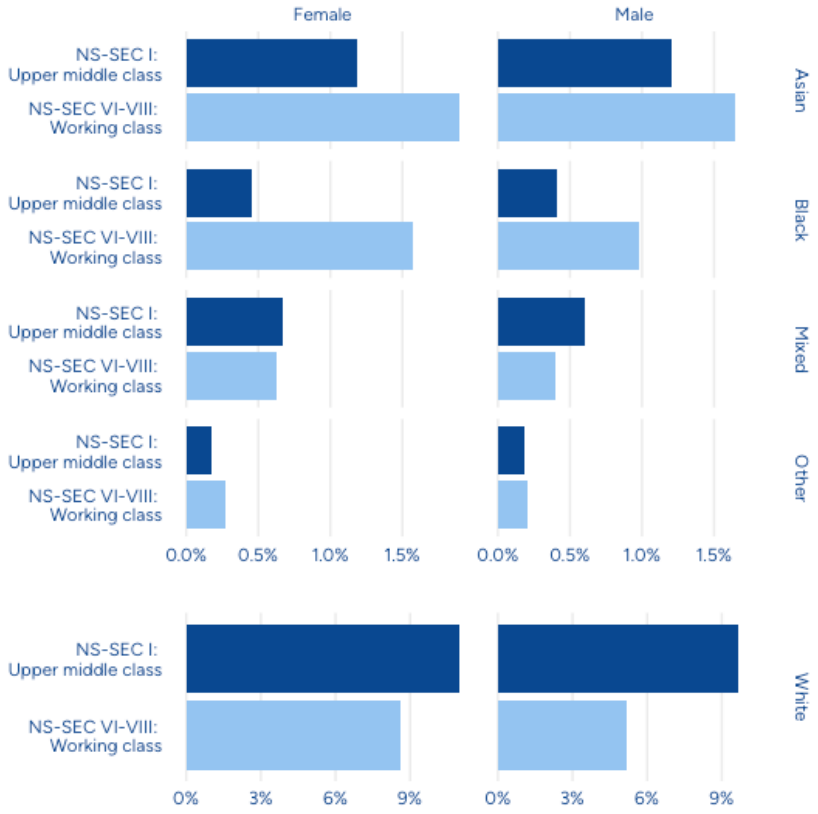


Figure 23: Proportions of all students by class, gender and ethnicity



Drama

As with Art, the deep dive into Drama begins with Figure 24, showing the class origin of students for all universities offering Drama courses.

The comparison with Art is striking. There are many more Russell Group institutions offering Drama, and they all, aside from University of Glasgow and Queen's University Belfast, have over a third of their cohort from upper-middle-class backgrounds. The Universities of Sheffield (45%), Birmingham (44%), and Exeter (44%) all have proportions over 40%, higher than the average proportion of upper-middle-class origin students studying all subjects at the Russell Group (37%).

The class crisis is clear at Russell Group institutions. Interestingly, specialist institutions such as Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA), Central and University of the Arts London (UAL) have proportions lower than the overall average of upper-middle-class origin students (25%) on all subjects. The dynamics of class in drama schools are a huge subject of concern, yet these figures suggest there are substantial differences depending on the type of institution offering this subject.

Figure 24: Individual HE institutions ranked by proportions of Drama students from upper-middle-class backgrounds

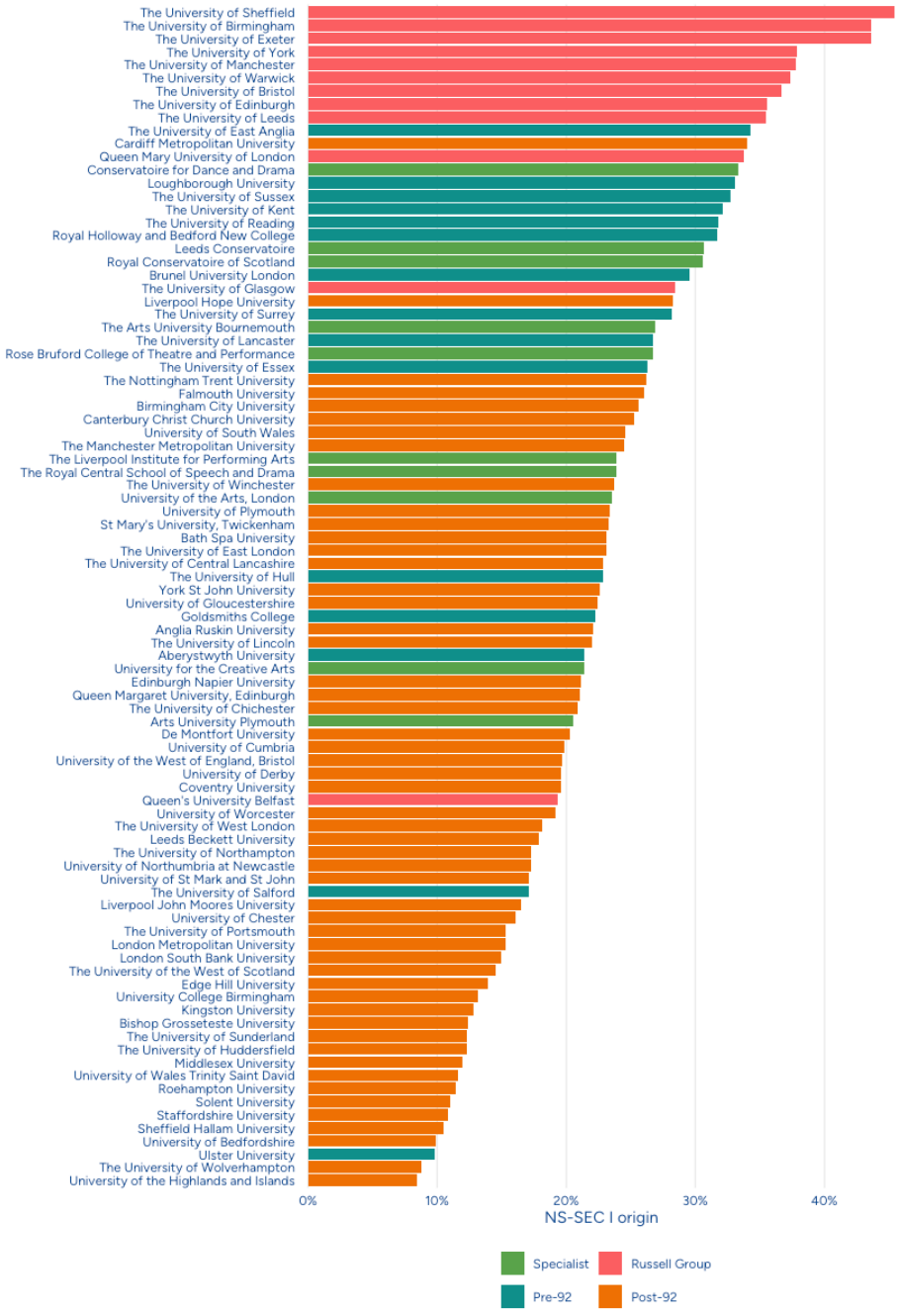


Figure 25: Proportions of Drama students by class, gender and ethnicity

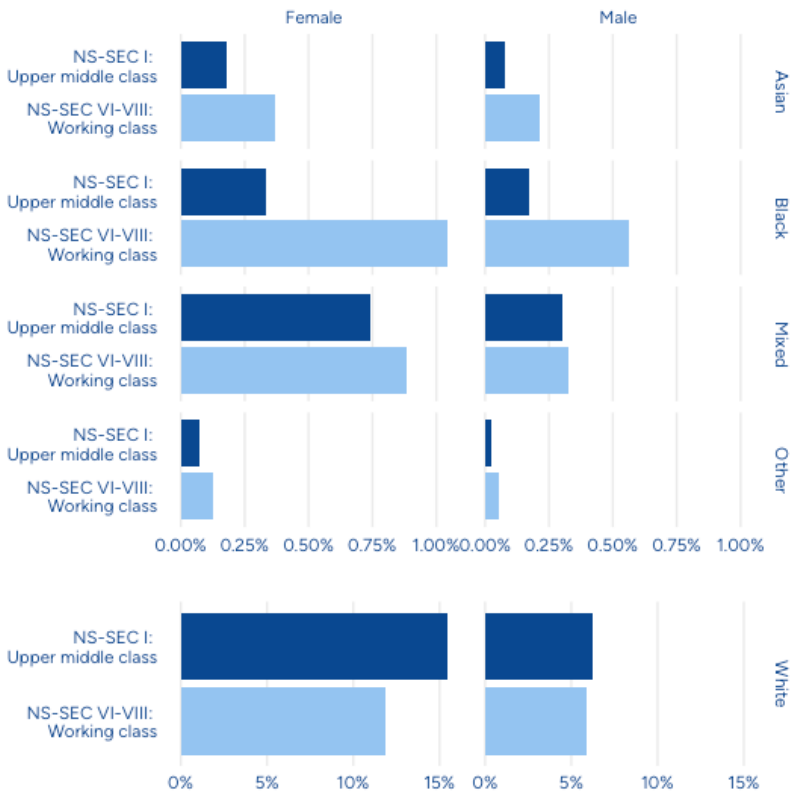


Figure 25 shows the proportions of students studying Drama by ethnicity, gender, upper-middle-class and working-class origins. Figure 26 presents the same information, but with school type rather than class origins. These can be compared with Figures 21 and 22, which have the proportions for all students.

As with Art, there are very low proportions of specific demographic groups studying drama. White upper-middle-class origin women are the largest single demographic (17%) group, and Black working-class origin women are the only ethnic minority group that are more than 1% of drama students.

For school type, White, state educated women are the largest proportion (52%), although this is a smaller proportion than Art students.

Figure 26: Proportions of Drama students by school type, gender and ethnicity

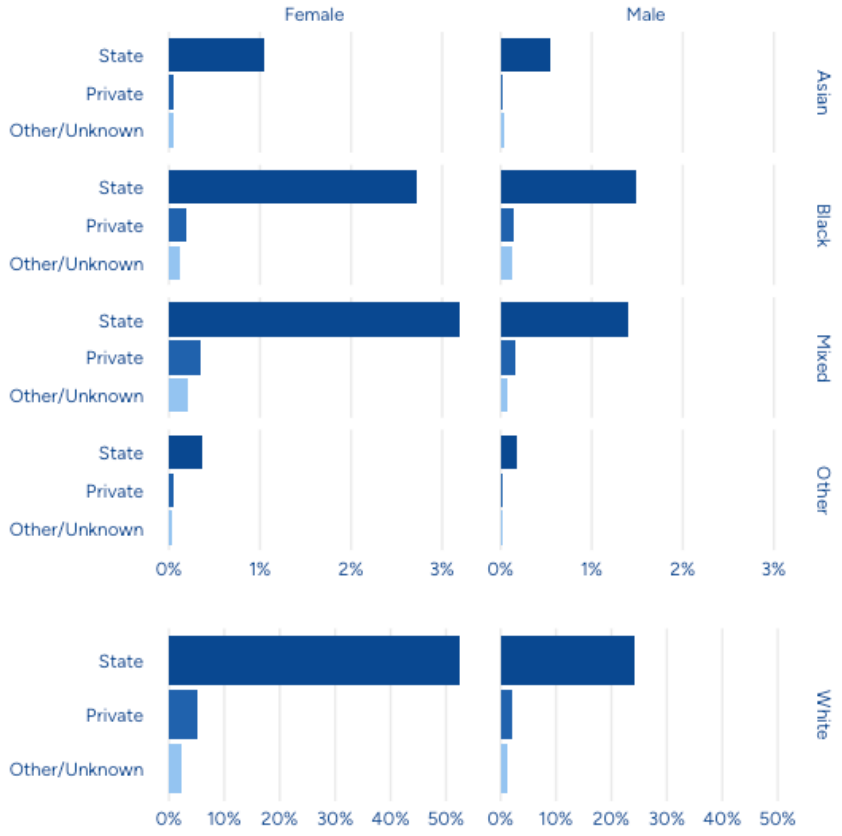
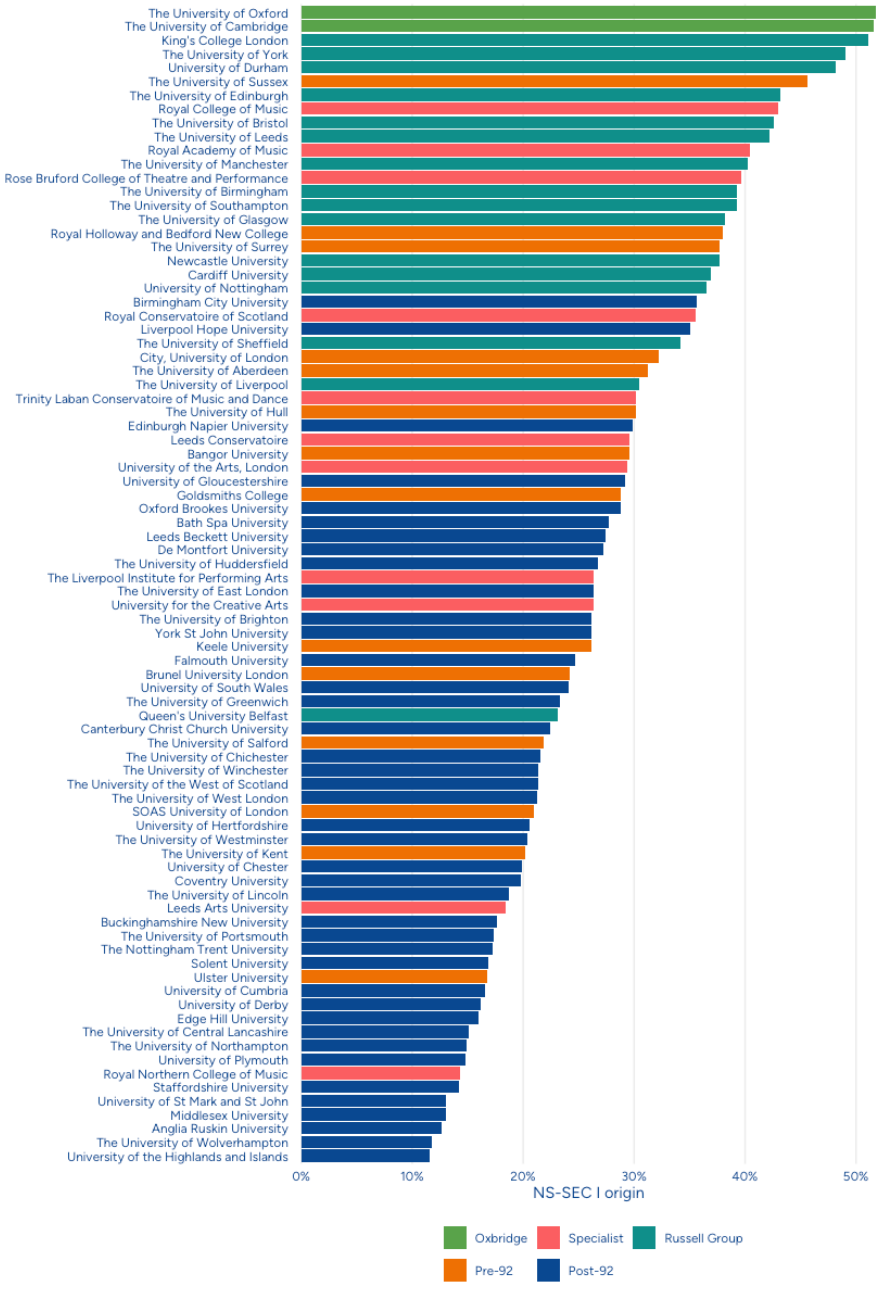


Figure 27: Individual HE institutions ranked by proportions of Music students from upper-middle-class backgrounds



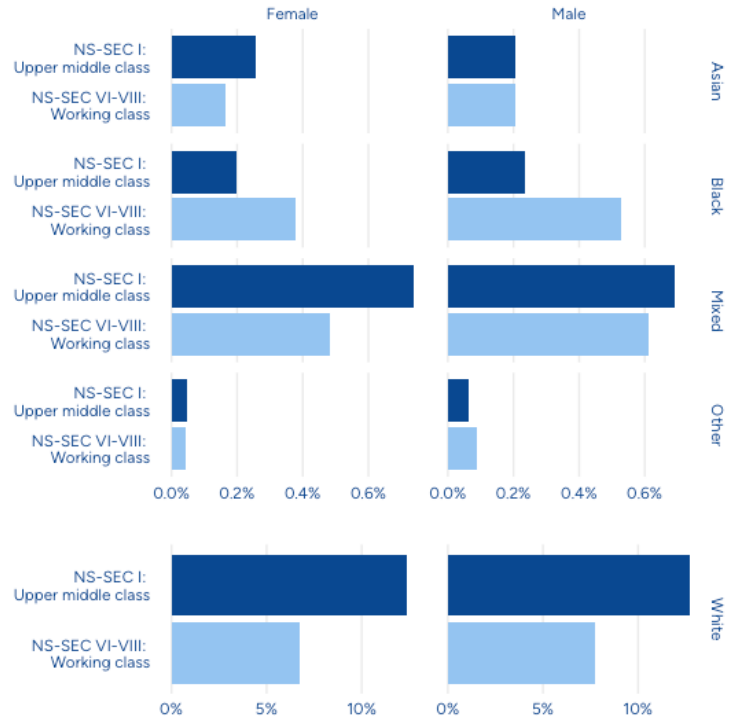
"Oxford, Cambridge and King's College London all have over 50% of their Music students from upper-middle-class backgrounds. The Russell Group, as with Drama, dominates the top half of the figure."

Music

Finally, we turn to Music. Music has been a subject of intensive interest from scholars examining inequalities in HE.[88] As with Art and Drama, Figure 27 shows the proportions of students from upper-middle-class origins at all universities offering Music courses.

Oxford, Cambridge and King's College London all have over 50% of their Music students from upper-middle-class backgrounds. The Russell Group, as with Drama, dominates the top half of the figure. The proportions are generally higher than drama, with six Russell Group institutions having between 40-49% of their intake from upper-middle-class backgrounds, as compared with three for Drama. Queen's University Belfast's low proportions, as with drama, is the outlier within the Russell Group.

Figure 28: Proportions of Music students by class, gender and ethnicity



[88] Bull, A. *et al.* (2022). *Slow Train Coming? Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in UK Music Higher Education*. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Music Studies network. Available at: https://edims.network/report/slowtraincoming/

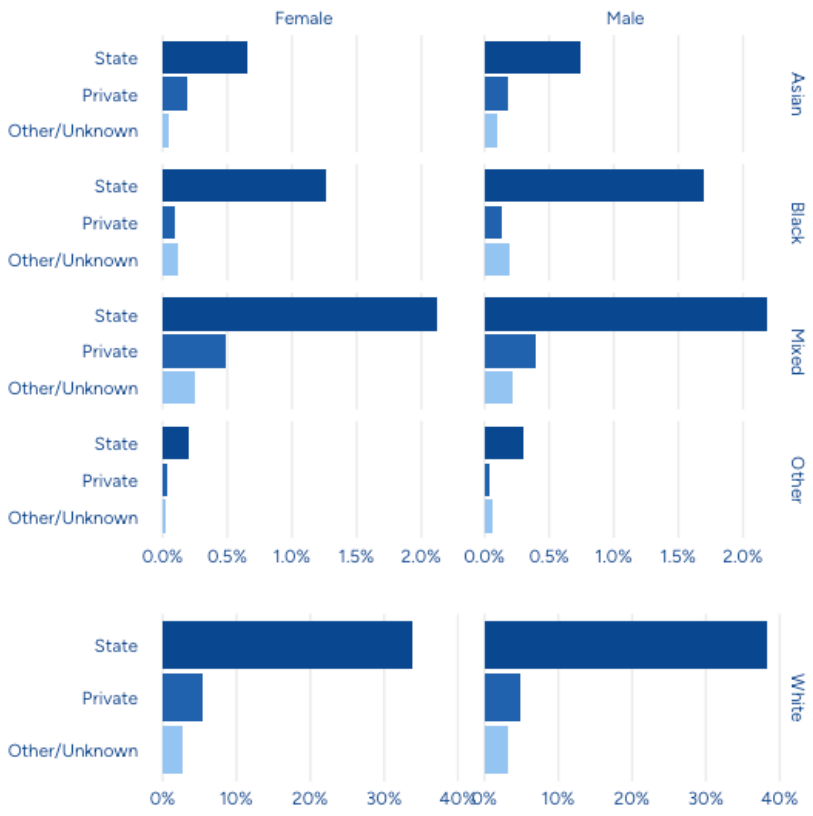
For an intersectional perspective, Figure 28 shows the proportions of students studying Music by ethnicity, gender, upper-middle-class and working-class origins. Figure 29 presents the same information, but with school type rather than class origins. As with Art and Drama, these proportions can be compared to the overall figures presented above.

The representation of those from minority ethnic backgrounds is, as with Art and Drama, still low. The gender dynamics are, however, quite distinctive. Whereas women, particularly White women, dominate Art and Drama, White men are a more substantial proportion of Music students. Indeed, upper-middle-class men (16%) are fractionally greater than upper-middle-class women. There are also fewer working-class women than men.

The gender balance is even more striking in terms of type of school attended, where the proportions of state educated men (38%) and women (34%) and men (5%) and women (6%) from independent schools are much more evenly matched when compared to the much larger proportions of women in Drama and Art degrees.

Even with this gender balance, the combined proportion of privately educated White men and women studying Music (11%) is the largest of all three subjects (with Drama at 7% and Art at 4%).

Figure 29: Proportions of Music students by school type, gender and ethnicity



Conclusion

Many of the inequalities revealed by this data should not be a surprise. The findings build on well-established and longstanding research that has tried to call attention, using both quantitative and qualitative methods, to the uneven spread of opportunities in creative HE.[89]

"Currently, key parts of the sector seem only to welcome those from the most privileged backgrounds, providing a narrow pipeline accessible to an already advantaged few."

Inequalities in the creative workforce, along with the importance of HE as a route into that workforce, indicate the existence of inequalities in the 'pipeline' for the creative sector. At the same time, longstanding fears as to the place of creative subjects in the education system, both in HE and in schools, suggest we might expect to find an unequal pattern of mobility into creative HE subjects.

What is most striking, and perhaps most worrying, is the stratification of inequality in creative HE. On the surface, creative HE seems like it mirrors inequality found in HE more generally. However, it is only when we look at specific subjects, as we have done for art, drama, and music, or specific types of universities, such as the Russell Group, that we see how institutional prestige goes hand in hand with the most extreme forms of class inequalities.

Some of these inequalities are straightforward to explain. The collapse of access to music teaching over the past 14 years, along with marginalisation of arts subjects in the state school curriculum, likely plays a significant role in the dominance of private schools and upper-middle-class students at the most prestigious specialist institutions.[90] Broader issues associated with the long-term struggle to widen participation beyond the upper middle class have a significant impact on the absence of working-class students from Russell Group institutions. These contextual factors play into the explanations for the class crisis in creative HE. They do not, however, excuse it.

[89] Quantitative research: Comunian, R. *et al.* (2023). *Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category.* APPG for Creative Diversity. Available at: www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education and Qualitative research: Banks, M. and Oakley, K. (2015). The dance goes on forever? Art schools, class and UK higher education. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 22 (1), 41–57.
[90] Ashton, H. *et al.* (2024). *The state of the Arts.* Campaign for the Arts & Centre for Cultural and Media Policy Studies, University of Warwick. Available at: https://www.campaignforthearts.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/The-State-of-the-Arts.pdf

Other research-led interventions have given detailed recommendations on what needs to change and 'what works' to address this crisis.[91] At a time of huge financial pressure for HE in the UK, institutions may be tempted to avoid the pressing need for equality of access. In spite of these significant problems for universities, and the pressing need for a new financial settlement, creative HE will struggle to attract support if it continues to be exclusive.

Currently, key parts of the sector seem only to welcome those from the most privileged backgrounds, providing a narrow pipeline accessible to an already advantaged few. The more prestigious institutions, which as we've evidenced are where the inequalities in access are most acute, need to do better on recruiting more students from working-class origins into their creative degree programmes. Moreover, new measures to ensure these institutions are accountable for making the change are also needed.

In its current form, creative HE is a major reason why the creative sector has such catastrophically low levels of social mobility. It is not delivering on the new government's mission to offer opportunities in culture, nor is it part of a cultural system that fairly reflects the diversity and talent of the UK.

[91] Comunian, R. *et al.* (2023). *Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category.* APPG for Creative Diversity. Available at: www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education

Elitism in the creative industries

The previous section of analysis has highlighted who is getting into creative higher education course and creative occupations. The next section looks at those at the very top of the creative industries, the 'creative elite' who star in and produce the content we watch and listen to everyday, from those at the top of TV and film, to top directors, pop musicians and classical musicians.

Arts schemes, particularly in acting, to improve access for working-class young people seemed to boom in the 1990s, but many successful schemes have been cut due to funding constraints in the arts.

Methodology

Elite figures have been defined as those who have been nominated for awards for their craft or topped the music charts. We conducted desk-based research using a range of different sources, including individuals' social media profiles, media coverage and Who's Who. If data on an individual was not available online, individuals were personally contacted to request the information. Through these methods, data was found for at least 70% of the schools and universities attended by the individuals in the section below, other than where highlighted. More details on how schools and universities were classified can be found in our previous report, *Elitist Britain 2019*.[92]

TV and film

The lack of working-class representation in TV and film has gained wide-scale media attention over recent years and was the focus of the 2024 McTaggart lecture at Edinburgh Television Festival led by screenwriter James Graham, in which he commented "*If you see a person, or a character, who looks like you or sounds like you on screen, whose experience or dilemmas, or joy, reflects your own… you feel more seen. There is a catharsis there, for audiences. A validation*".

Previous research has found that just over 8% of those working in TV and film come from households where the main earner was in a semi-routine/routine occupation (categorised by the Creative PEC as 'working-class') – the lowest level seen in a decade.[93] Arts schemes, particularly in

[92] The Sutton Trust. (2019). *Elitist Britain 2019*. The Sutton Trust and The Social Mobility Commission. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/elitist-britain-2019/

[93] McAndrew, S. *et al.* (2024). *State of the Nation: Arts, Culture and Heritage: Audiences and Workforce*. Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, Newcastle University and RSA. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/state_of_the_nation/arts-cultural-heritage-audiences-and-workforce/

acting, to improve access for working-class young people seemed to boom in the 1990s, but many successful schemes have been cut due to funding constraints in the arts.[94]

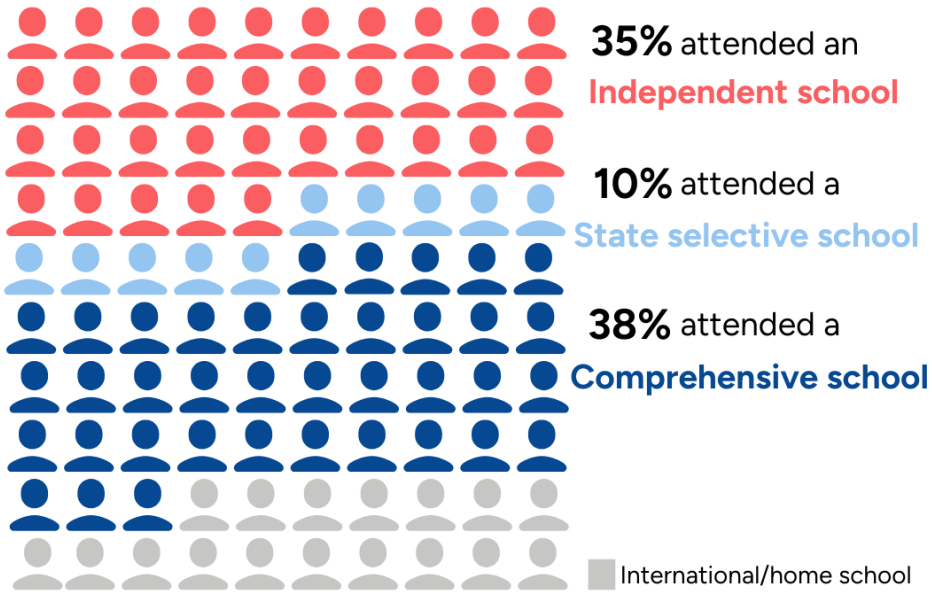
Those from disadvantaged backgrounds who have made it in the acting industry have shared their stories of being 'typecast' for working-class roles by more affluent directors and writers, who are not accurately portraying the story of socio-economically disadvantaged people. Those with regional accents have also shared that they have been shut out of a diverse range of roles, typically given to those with Received Pronunciation.[95]

A similar trend is seen here when looking at the educational background of BAFTA nominated actors. 35% went to a private school, making them five times more likely to have attended a fee-paying school than the population as a whole, where 7% attend (Figure 30).

[94] Bakare, L. (2024, September 1). *Lack of arts schemes for working class will make UK theatre whiter and posher, director says*. The Guardian, accessed 8th October 2024. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/stage/article/2024/sep/01/lack-of-arts-schemes-for-working-class-will-make-uk-theatre-whiter-and-posher-director-says

[95] Friedman, S. and O'Brien, D. (2017). Resistance and resignation: responses to typecasting in British acting. *Cultural Sociology*, 11 (3), 359-376. Available at: https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/84231/1/Friedman_Resistance%20and%20resignation.pdf and Tapper, J. (2022, December 10). *Huge decline of working class people in the arts reflects fall in wider society*. The Observer, accessed 8th October 2024. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2022/dec/10/huge-decline-working-class-people-arts-reflects-society

Figure 30: School attended by BAFTA nominated actors in TV and film



Data based on those born or primarily based in the UK who were nominated for Best Actor/Actress or supporting Actor/Actress at the BAFTA Film awards, or Best Actor/Actress at the BAFTA Television awards between 2019 and 2024 (N=84; 97% of sample).

In 2019, the Sutton Trust looked at members of the film and TV industries collectively who featured on the Sunday Times Rich List, finding 44% had attended an independent school.[96] Similarly, in 2016, considering BAFTA winners in film for best actor, actress and director for the previous 25 years, 42% had attended an independent school.[97] Although these proportions have reduced, it is worth noting that the rich list is skewed towards an older cohort and since our last research, BAFTA has actively changed its nomination criteria in an effort to improve diversity amongst nominees.[98]

64% of this group of elite actors went to university, with 29% attending a specialist arts university or conservatoire for undergraduate study (Figure 31). 15% have been to just one institution, the Royal Academy of Acting

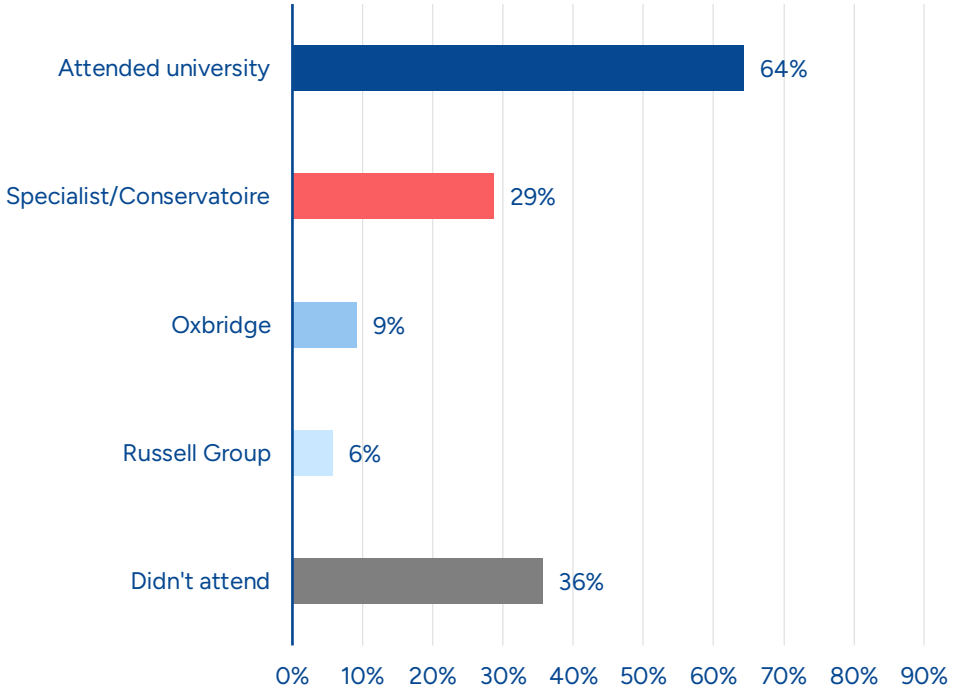
[96] The Sutton Trust. (2019). *Elitist Britain 2019*. The Sutton Trust and The Social Mobility Commission. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/elitist-britain-2019/

[97] Kirby, P. (2016). *Leading people 2016*. Sutton Trust. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/leading-people-2016-education-background/

[98] Friedman, S. and O'Brien, D. (2017). Resistance and resignation: responses to typecasting in British acting. *Cultural Sociology*, 11 (3), 359-376. Available at: https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/84231/1/Friedman_Resistance%20and%20resignation.pdf

(RADA). 9% have a postgraduate qualification; all of which are from an arts specialist institution. 9% went to Oxbridge. Again, these figures are notably different to the population as a whole, with only 19% of the population attending university on average.

Figure 31: University attended by BAFTA nominated actors in TV and film



Data based on those born or primarily based in the UK who were nominated for Best Actor/Actress or supporting Actor/Actress at the BAFTA Film awards, or Best Actor/Actress at the BAFTA Television awards between 2019 and 2024 (N=87; 100% of sample).

Going to a specialist drama schools like RADA provides years of a variety of classes and modules to craft important skills like confidence, stage presence and diction. Opportunities to meet industry peers and professionals are offered throughout a course, and there are typically showcase events that allow aspiring actors to be seen by agents. Those not attending are therefore missing out on significant opportunities to build up a network and connections for after they graduate.[99] Indeed,

[99] Smith, J. (2023). *Conservatoires (November 2023)*. Prospects, accessed 8th October 2024. Available at: https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/creative-arts-and-design/conservatoires#:~:text=You'll%20be%20able%20to,theatre%20careers%2C'%20says%20Patsy.

BAFTA winner Jodie Comer has said that casting directors had previously had issues with the fact she has not had formal acting training.[100]

Attending any university can still be beneficial for aspiring actors, including building up a creative professional network and practising their craft through student societies. For example, multiple BAFTA nominee Dame Emma Thompson was part of the prestigious Footlights comedy society while studying at Cambridge, which has many other notable alumni, including Hugh Laurie and Sue Perkins. They have said the society allowed Thompson to gain invaluable improvisation and directing experience, leading to them performing in several large productions, including a show at the Edinburgh Fringe.[101]

Further on in an acting career, financial issues can also limit those from disadvantaged backgrounds affording to travel to auditions, particularly for those outside of London (where many auditions are held). The audition process, not just travelling but also putting together self-recorded show reels, can be time consuming, taking time away from studying and paid work.[102]

Directing

Directors, as well as screenwriters, commissioners and critics, are ultimately responsible for shaping the content that ends up on television and shown at cinemas. But without a socio-economically diverse talent pool producing content that reflects their culture and society, there is a narrow circle of influence that, albeit unintentionally, risks blocking certain stories from being told.[103] Actors and writers from working-class backgrounds have shared that, even after a big break that gains them a BAFTA nomination, it is still difficult to get something commissioned again,

[100] Fisk, H. (2023, April 12). *Jodie Comer assures young people that drama school isn't the only career path.* Drama and Theatre, accessed 8th October 2024. Available at: https://www.dramaandtheatre.co.uk/content/news/jodie-comer-assures-young-people-that-drama-school-isn-t-the-only-career-path/

[101] BIFA. (N.D.). *Emma Thompson*. Bifa.film, accessed 8th October 2024. Available at: https://web.archive.org/web/20130922122310/http://footlights.org/history

[102] Keynes, S. (2023, August 22). *The economics of acting*. Financial Times, accessed 8th October 2024. Available at: https://www.ft.com/content/227f8df9-e486-400c-a744-775cab5db38c

[103] Marsan, E. (2018). *I know how hard it is for working-class actors to succeed. We can change that*. The Guardian, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/aug/14/working-class-actors-diversity-quotas-eddie-marsan

with some even deciding to quit the industry because of the struggle.[104] The nature of the UK's TV and film industries means large 'elite' firms dominate production, such as ITV and Channel 4; and many of these firms have limited access for individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds. *The Class Ceiling* highlighted the anonymised example of a national TV broadcaster (now revealed to be Channel 4), where only 2.5% of those in top positions were from working-class backgrounds, and the majority of working-class employees were working in lower paid lower or middle management roles.[105]

Education data for BAFTA Television award nominated directors (particularly for factual and live/multi-camera shows such as live sport) was challenging to source. Considering those nominated for BAFTA Film 'Best Director' award as well as those nominated for a BAFTA Television 'Best Director: Fiction' award, data was available for 61% (N=17) directors, and almost half (47%) went to an independent school. Data was available on the higher education of 89% (N=25) directors. 92% have attended university, with 20% graduating from a Russell Group, 16% from Oxbridge and 8% from a specialist creative institution.

For factual nominations, we were able to gather data for 69% (N=18) directors regarding university attendance – 94% attended university, with 33% graduating from Oxbridge and 17% graduated from Russell Group institutions. None had attended a specialist arts institution. Research has singled out the documentary industry for having particularly notable gatekeeping of roles, with a backdrop of reduced funding for such content from TV channels further narrowing who is being successful in getting their ideas commissioned.[106]

Social mobility in the screen industries is starting to receive attention; BAFTA began publishing the socio-economic backgrounds of their members in October 2023,[107] while in 2024 the TV Foundation launched an

[104] Richardson, H. (2024, June 6). *'I'm sick of it!' The diabolical reality of being one of the few working-class people in TV*. The Guardian, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/article/2024/jun/06/im-sick-of-it-the-diabolical-reality-of-being-one-of-the-few-working-class-people-in-tv

[105] Friedman, S. and Laurison, D. (2019). *The Class Ceiling: Why it Pays to be Privileged*. Bristol: Policy Press.

[106] Bailey, M. and Tarvovskaya, E. (2024) Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: Class Inequalities within the British Documentary Film Industry. *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, 21 (2), 23-152. Available at: https://repository.essex.ac.uk/37215/1/Class%20Inequalities%20British%20Documentary%20editing%20copy.pdf

[107] BAFTA. (2023, October 16). *BAFTA sets out initiatives to promote social mobility*. BAFTA.org, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://www.bafta.org/media-centre/press-releases/bafta-sets-out-initiatives-to-promote-social-mobility

Impact Unit to improve co-ordination between those working to improve social mobility in television.[108] But there is not a quick fix to this issue and sustained funding for a wide range of initiatives across film and television is required.

Music

Pop music

The backgrounds of celebrities, notably music stars, gained widespread media attention in the 2020s, with nepotism being a particular buzzword; this is the act of gaining advantage over peers due to connections through family and friends.[109] In light of this, the following section examines solo artists and band members who have had an album in the top 40 UK albums of the year from 2019 to 2023.

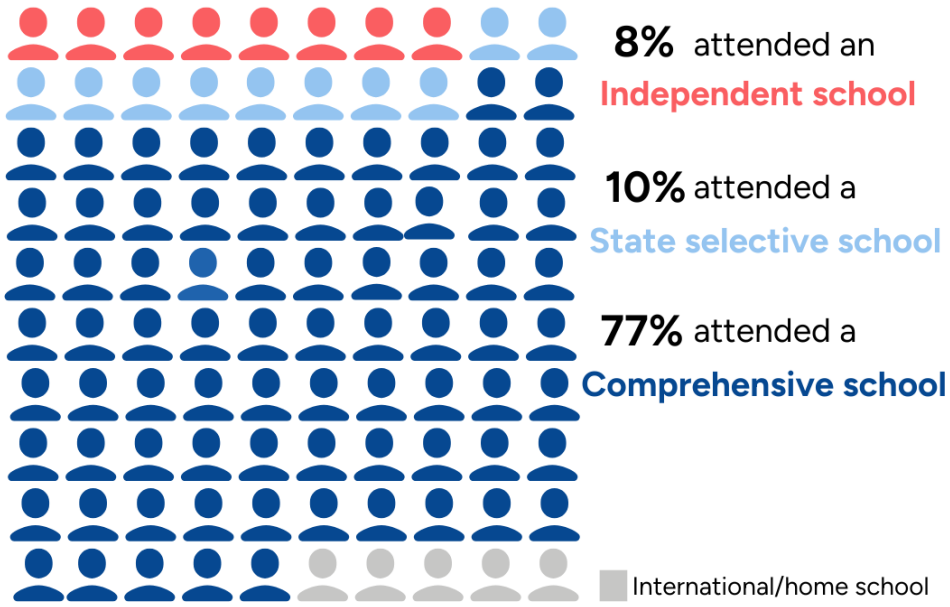
8% of artists went to an independent school; similar to the 7% of the UK population overall (Figure 32). 77% went to a state comprehensive. 10% went to a selective school – this includes the Brit school, which is selective based on auditions across art forms, and has notable high-profile alumni like Adele and Leona Lewis. The school has previously been praised for opening a specialist education to a more diverse cohort of young people.[110]

[108] Televisual. (2024, August 21). *The TV Foundation launches Impact Unit*. Televisual, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://www.televisual.com/news/the-tv-foundation-launches-impact-unit/

[109] For instance, see: Price, S. (2024, April 20). *Pop is awash with nepo babies – Lennon and McCartney are just the latest. But why aren't they better at it?* The Guardian, accessed 8th October 2024. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2024/apr/20/pop-nepo-babies-lennon-mccartney

[110] Cragg, M. (2022. September 2). *'Adele gave us hope': the inside story of the Brit School*. The Guardian accessed 7th October 2024. https://www.theguardian.com/music/2022/sep/02/brit-school-artistic-legacy

Figure 32: School attended by musicians with a top 40 album of the year



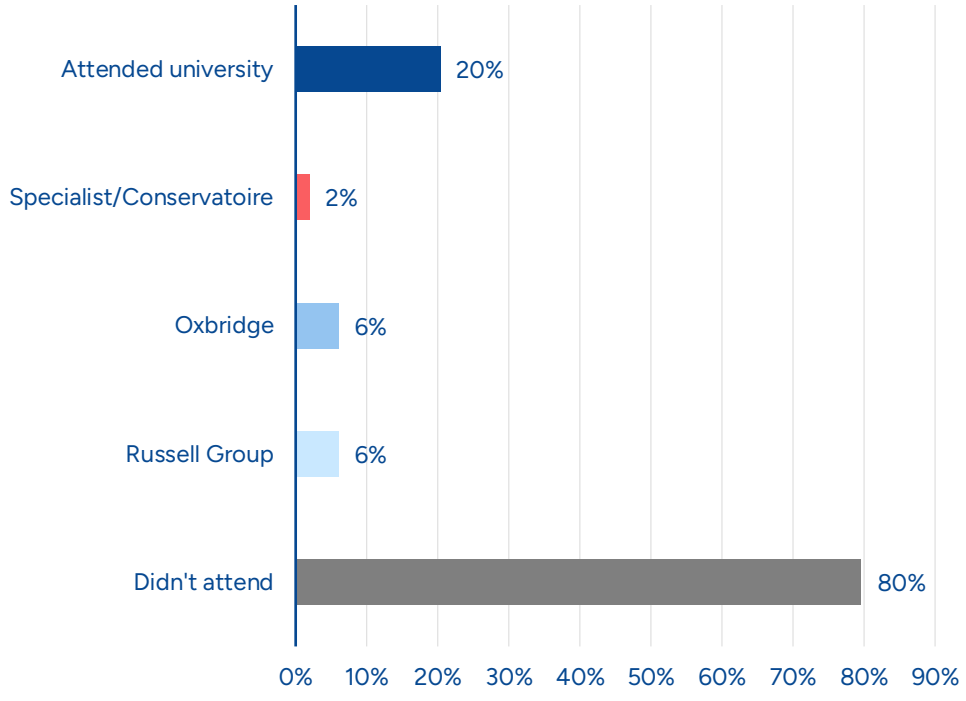
Data based on those born or primarily based in the UK who have had an album on the UK Official Charts Company top 40 albums of the year between 2019 and 2023 (N=48; 98% of sample).

Comparing to previous data from the Sutton Trust, the proportion of top musicians from state educated backgrounds has stayed broadly similar to previous data, having gone up by 3 percentage points since 2019, while the figure educated at an independent school has decreased by 12 percentage points (20% in 2019).[111]

The proportion of artists who went to university is 20%, a decline from 29% seen in 2019 (Figure 33). The low proportion of pop stars attending university may be due to the nature of the career path, with popular music artists often becoming famous at a young age, with a great amount of time in their early adulthood spent pursuing their career.

[111] The Sutton Trust. (2019). *Elitist Britain 2019*. The Sutton Trust and The Social Mobility Commission. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/elitist-britain-2019/

Figure 33: University attended by musicians with a top 40 album of the year



Data based on those born or primarily based in the UK who have had an album on the UK Official Charts Company top 40 albums of the year between 2019 and 2023 (N=49; 100% of sample).

Earlier in the 21st century, reality TV shows like The *X Factor* offered a path into the industry for those from a wide range of backgrounds, with access to industry insiders and vocal coaches offered to those who made it to the live shows. But more recently, social media platforms like TikTok have helped aspiring artists promote their music without a label or access to a recording studio. For example, after previously working in construction, Sam Ryder rose to fame on TikTok during the COVID-19 pandemic, attracting the attention of a major record label.[112] He went on to have a UK number 1 album and represent the United Kingdom at Eurovision in 2022.

"The rise in the number of state educated musicians releasing best-selling albums in recent years is encouraging, but under the surface there are still significant access issues."

However, financial barriers to this industry still exist, with low pay being a significant issue, particularly for those at the start of their career. Around half of the UK's working musicians are earning less than £14,000 from music, with those without financial support or savings to fall back on often

[112] Embley, J. (2022, May 14). *Who is Sam Ryder? TikTok singer's UK Eurovision 2022 pick with SPACE MAN song*. The Standard, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://www.standard.co.uk/culture/music/who-is-sam-ryder-tiktok-singer-eurovision-2022-uk-space-man-song-b987244.html

having to work second jobs alongside their musical career.[113] Other issues young musicians themselves have highlighted are being unable to afford recording space and equipment; and a lack of connections to music industry professionals.[114] Sam Fender, who had one of the top selling albums in 2022, has openly discussed how he earnt very little at the start of his career, and how if it wasn't for a chance meeting of a manager in his local pub, he may not have received a break into the industry.[115]

Even though artists playing smaller venues often receive low pay, doing so is a key step into entering the industry. However, the UK's grassroots music venues are in the midst of widescale financial difficulty – in 2023, over a third of said venues reported financial losses, with 13% of venues closing in the last year. This, in turn, means fewer venues with affordable tickets are offering the opportunity to see live music to disadvantaged young people, which could mean fewer young people are inspired to enter the music business.[116]

The rise in the number of state educated musicians releasing best-selling albums in recent years is encouraging, but under the surface there are still significant access issues. Moreover, considering genres outside of the mainstream charts, like classical music, brings more insight into how financial barriers as well as other factors like education can prevent access a musical career.

Classical music

Outside of the mainstream charts, where pop, rock and dance music tend to dominate, elitism in classical music has been well documented. In 2021, Arts Council England found that over 80% of England's classical musicians had parents who attended university and were from affluent areas, [117] with

[113] Musicians' Union. (2023, September 11). *First Ever UK Musicians' Census Provides Unparalleled Insight into the Careers of the UK's Musicians and Music Creators*. Musicians' Union, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://musiciansunion.org.uk/news/first-ever-uk-musicians-census-provides-unparalleled-insight-into-the-careers-of-the-uk-s-musicians

[114] Youth Music. (2020). *A blueprint for the future: A new generation ready to transform the music industries*. Youth Music. Available at: https://youthmusic.org.uk/blueprint-future

[115] Shutler, A. (2021, September 30). *Sam Fender: 'There's not many working class musicians. It's hard to write an anthem at your house in France'*. The I, access 7th November 2024. Available at: https://inews.co.uk/culture/music/sam-fender-interview-seventeen-going-under-theres-not-many-working-class-musicians-1226194?srsltid=AfmBOoq3M4oEWQLGnJMovCutXa-HcqfMBMIqRTfBGwJBTeRHaxNSZmW4

[116] Taylor, A. (2024, January 24). *Grassroots live music venues suffer 'most challenging year', report says*. BBC News, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-68050664

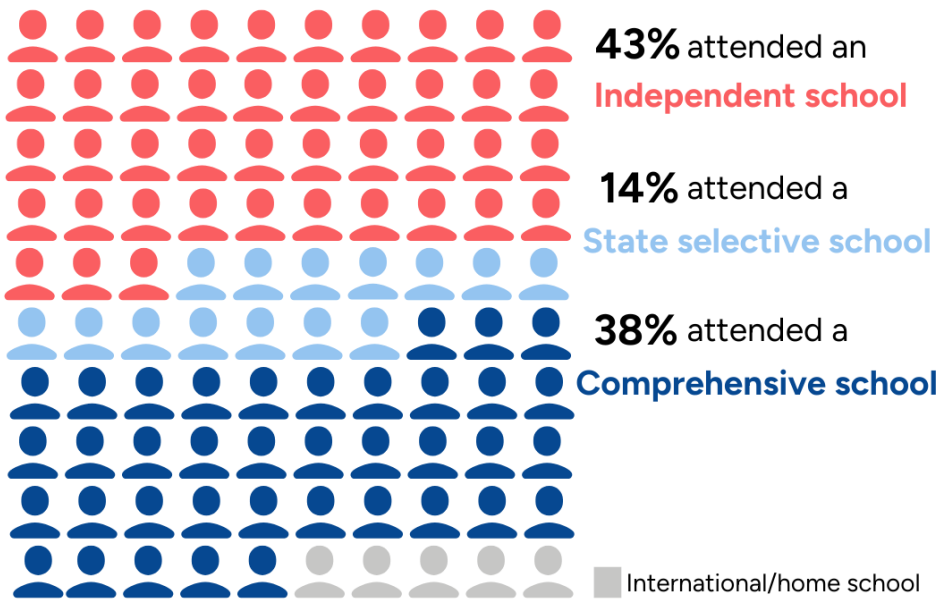
[117] Lockheart, F. (2021, November 11). *Arts Council report reveals more support is needed for budding musicians*. Classical Music, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://www.classical-music.uk/news/article/arts-council-report-reveals-more-support-is-needed-for-budding-musicians

public opinions often categorising classical music as the genre of the upper class.[118]

To investigate this further, the following analysis uses data from the UK classical albums chart, considering musicians (including opera singers and conductors) who have featured on a number 1 album from January 2019 to July 2024.

43% of these musicians went to an independent school (over six times higher than the UK average of 7%), while 38% went to a state comprehensive (Figure 34).[119]

Figure 34: School attended by classical musicians with a number 1 album



Data based on those born or primarily based in the UK who have featured on an album that reached number 1 on the UK Official Charts Company top 40 classical albums chart, between January 2019 and July 2024 (N=42;76% of sample).

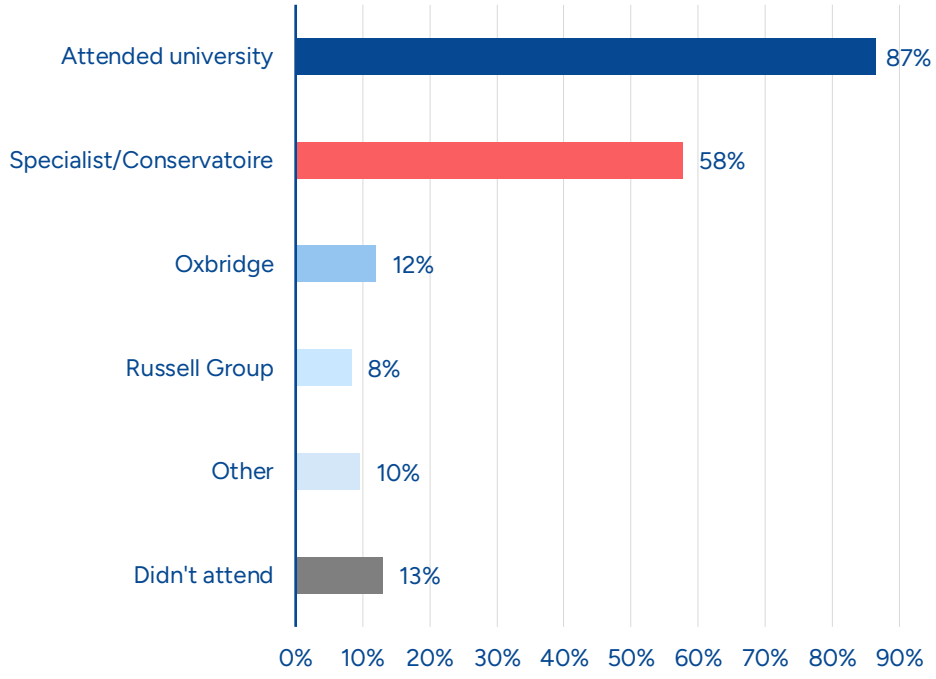
[118] Owolade, T. (2023, July 2). *Hooked on classics? But if you want to learn to play, you'd better be posh.* The Observer, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/jul/02/classical-music-cuts-fighting-for-its-life-preserve-of-rich

[119] The figure has decreased from 75%, when the Sutton Trust looked at the backgrounds of Classical musicians using a different methodology of Classical Brit Award winners in 2016 (these awards have not been awarded since 2018). See: Kirby, P. (2016). *Leading people 2016.* Sutton Trust. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/leading-people-2016-education-background/

Private school scholarships are often given to students which a particular talent in music but are often not reserved for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. The UK also has prestigious independent schools that specialize in music, such as The Purcell School, and more generally, private schools are more likely to offer music lessons at GCSE and A Level.[120]

While university attendance is low for those in the mainstream music industry (as seen above), 87% of elite classical musicians have been to university. 58% have been to a specialist creative institution; 56% attended a conservatoire, with the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music being the most common institutions to attend (Figure 35).

Figure 35: University attended by classical musicians with a number 1 album



Data based on those born or primarily based in the UK who have featured on an album that reached number 1 on the UK Official Charts Company top 40 classical albums chart, between January 2019 and July 2024 (N=52;95% of sample). 'Other' institutions include pre-1992s, post-1992s and The Open University.

[120] Woolcock, N. (2023, June 26). *Classical music 'becoming preserve of private schools'*. The Times, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://www.thetimes.com/culture/music/article/classical-music-becoming-preserve-of-private-schools-sn9knt8xd

12% of this group of elite musicians went to Oxbridge for undergraduate study and 8% went to a Russell Group. As is the case with screen industries, access to teachers, lessons and equipment through student societies at university can facilitate training to improve a student's craft. They can also act as a stepping stone to key performance opportunities both on and outside of campus.

But, as seen in this report, access to music courses at university is lower for socio-economically disadvantaged young people. Particularly at conservatoires, entry requirements expect applicants to have had lessons or have additional qualifications (such as a diploma in a musical instrument) – this training is often expensive, thus socio-economically disadvantaged students are less likely to gain access.[121]

Socio-economic and demographic differences are also seen in consumption of this genre. Audiences for classical music tend to be older and are more likely to be from affluent backgrounds – 54% of Radio 3 listeners (one of the most popular classical radio stations) are from the AB affluent social grade,[122] which may partly explain why a large number of classical music elites have been privately educated. Over recent years, interest in this genre amongst young people has increased. A survey from the National Philharmonic Orchestra found that interest in classical music from under 25s has risen from 15% to 25% in the last year alone.[123] This has been attributed to the use of classical music in video games and popular TV series; easy access to a range of music genres through streaming platform like Spotify; and trends on social media like TikTok.[124] The genre also gained popularity in the pandemic, with listeners saying it aided relaxation.[125] As it stands, the increase in popularity of classical music has

[121] Comunian, R. *et al*. (2023). *Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category*. APPG for Creative Diversity. Available at: www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education

[122] BOP Consulting. (2022). *Research into the classical music ecosystem*. BOP Consulting for the BBC. Available at: https://abo.org.uk/assets/files/News-and-Press/BBC-Classical-Music-Review-BOP-Consulting-March-May-2022.pdf?v=1678811834

[123] Lockhart, F. (2023, December 1). *Number of young people interested in music on the rise*. Classical Music, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://www.classical-music.uk/news/article/number-of-young-people-interested-in-music-on-the-rise#:~:text=The%20report%2C%20released%20yesterday%2C%20found,the%20course%20of%20the%20year.

[124] Woodward, D. (2023, January 14). *Gen Z and young millennials' surprising obsession*. BBC Culture, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20230113-gen-z-and-young-millennials-surprising-obsession

[125] Shaw Roberts, M. (2020, August 19). *Research shows huge surge in Millennials and Gen Zers streaming classical music*. Classic FM, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at:https://www.classicfm.com/music-news/surge-millennial-gen-z-streaming-classical-music/

not translated to improved diversity amongst those in the classical music profession.

Recognition of access issues in this industry has triggered some changes. For example, the English National Opera is due to move to Manchester, which may improve access for those in the North of England.[126] But there is a certainly a fair way to go to improve access to this music genre, particularly when comparing to other genres like Pop.

[126] English National Opera. (2023, December 5). *ENO and Greater Manchester announce plans for new home in city region*. ENO.org, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://www.eno.org/news/eno-and-greater-manchester-announce-plans-for-new-home-in-city-region/

Discussion

This report has highlighted that students from working-class backgrounds are less likely to get a place to study creative subjects at Russell Group institutions and many specialist arts institutions, like conservatoires. Private school students dominate cohorts at prestigious institutions like the Royal College of Music and the Royal Academy of Music.

Disadvantaged young people are also less likely to find creative employment, and this report shows that this applies not only for socio-economically disadvantaged graduates, but also disadvantaged young people as a whole. Many entry level roles are short term and unpaid, with freelance work common for those in the creative industries, whatever the stage of their career. Finding such opportunities and sharing portfolio work is also harder for those less likely to have social and professional connections to others in the industry.

"To solve the entrenched issues limiting access to the creative industries for socio-economically disadvantaged young people, action is needed from creative employers, alongside changes across the education pipeline."

There are clear class inequalities in creative higher education and the creative workforce, with high profile creative figures in fields like television more likely to have attended private school and university than the population overall. This impacts the kinds of stories that are told and produced, with those in more privileged and well-connected social circles sharing job opportunities and leaving those from disadvantaged backgrounds less likely to see people like themselves on screen. It also means many talented young people from poorer homes are blocked from highly sought after careers in the arts. The findings here mirror those found in research on the creative industries for decades.

To solve the entrenched issues limiting access to the creative industries for socio-economically disadvantaged young people, action is needed from creative employers, alongside changes across the education pipeline.

Creative higher education

Funding

The value and importance of creative degrees has been highlighted through this report, yet funding for creative education is facing notable challenges, notably following the Augar review.

Using early career earnings to measure the value of creative degrees does not capture the full value of these subjects. As outlined, many roles in the sector are highly sought after because of the nature of the work. Creative graduate earnings may be low at first (as graduates may be taking lower

paid roles for experience or a combination of part-time jobs, with the expectation to reach better paid jobs later on in their careers. These graduates are also more likely to be self-employed or freelance, meaning their earnings data will be harder to accurately capture.[127] The full value of creative degrees should be taken into account when making funding and policy decisions for the higher education sector, including grant funding given to universities offering creative courses through the Office for Students. A broader range of factors should be considered, including the employable skills students learn, access to specific industries and job satisfaction, and contribution of the creative industries to the wider economy.

Widening participation

To tackle the socio-economic inequalities in creative higher education seen in this report, universities and specialist creative arts institutions have a responsibility to act on widening participation. Specialist arts institutions should be held to the same levels of scrutiny as other competitive institutions, like Oxford and Cambridge, recognising that access issues are often as bad or worse than at these institutions.

When the number of places on a course are small, and applications are highly competitive, widening participation staff have to navigate the balance of the skill levels needed to succeed on the course and the barriers for disadvantaged students to developing such skills.[128] The skills required in creative subjects often take several years to develop, highlighting the importance of creative outreach activities for younger age groups.

Universities and conservatoires should work with creative settings in their local area to engage with those interested in a creative subject, and jointly run schemes and activities that are either free to attend or subsidised for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Outreach activities should target local schools where awareness of specialist education in the arts may be lower.

Many conservatoires and drama schools already have junior schools, to allow young children to develop their skillset, but fees are expensive, and

[127] Bloom, M. (2020). *For love or money? Graduate motivations and the economic returns of creative higher education inside and outside the creative industries*. Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre and University of Sussex. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/research-reports/for-love-or-money

[128] Boliver, V. and Powell, M. (2022). Competing conceptions of fair admission and their implications for supporting students to fulfil their potential at university. *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education*, 27 (1), 8–15. Available at: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13603108.2022.2063429

these schools are not designed as a widening participation approach. Offering fully funded places at these schools for lower income children, alongside 1-1 support from teachers and coaches, would likely be an impactful outreach approach. This has already been successfully adopted by some conservatoires, like the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.[129]

Contextual admissions practices, for example reducing the grades required for a university offer, are another important strategy for widening participation. By using this approach, higher education institutions can recognise that academic achievement alone does not always fully reflect the skills and potential of applicants from lower socio-economic backgrounds. A great deal of work has now been done in the higher education sector to contextualise academic attainment, but so far, little work has been done to examine how contextual admissions could be applied to specialist creative courses, particularly when looking at arts specific skill sets, for example musical aptitude. The sector should have an open conversation on how best the wider context in which an applicant's current skill level (for example in a musical instrument, their performance at audition, or their artistic portfolio) can be taken into account when accessing their potential to succeed on their chosen course. This should consider varying access to resources for young people from different socio-economic backgrounds.

Financial support

Universities and conservatoires should also consider the financial barriers disadvantaged students face to applying to their institution and offer support to those who need it. Elements of applications like auditions, consultations (where applicants meet with a professor to discuss their suitability to a course) and portfolios, add to the cost of applying to a creative course. While in recent years, the majority of conservatoires have started to offer audition and travel waivers, signposting is often missed by applicants who are put off by the high costs, and currently no institutions offer further waivers for consultations.[130] Institutions should go further and remove fees for auditions, following in the footsteps of conservatoires like

[129] Bull, A.L.,Bhachu, D., and Blier-Carruthers, A. (2022) *Slow Train Coming?: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in UK Higher Education*. University of York. Available at: https://pure.york.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/slow-train-coming-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-in-uk-higher-e

[130] Comunian, R. *et al.* (2023). *Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category*. APPG for Creative Diversity. Available at: www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education

The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.[131] Conservatoires and other creative arts institutions that receive state funding should be banned from charging for auditions, with the government taking action against those who do to make this the norm across the sector.

Financial support that recognises the additional costs of studying a creative course should also be made available. For example, for music students, to account for rent, living costs and course-specific costs like instrument maintenance, the Royal College of Music in London estimates students will need up to £22,833 for a 43-week course.[132] There is a clear need for financial support offered to disadvantaged students studying a creative subject, such as university bursaries, to be easily accessible to cover additional costs like instruments and materials. This should underpin further increased maintenance support available to all undergraduate students, ideally through the re-introduction of maintenance grants to increase the overall amount of maintenance support students can access. Funding models for making these changes, including options with no additional costs for the Exchequer, can be found in the Sutton Trust's policy briefing on student maintenance, written in anticipation of the 2024 election.[133]

"Conservatoires and other creative arts institutions that receive state funding should be banned from charging for auditions, with the government taking action against those who do to make this the norm across the sector."

Creative employment

Access to the sector

Analysis in this report has shown that those from working-class backgrounds are less likely to be employed in a creative industry compared to those from middle-class backgrounds. Creative employers need to tackle the barriers into their industry through internships and entry-level roles.

Cost is a major barrier, with those looking to enter the sector often required to do multiple unpaid placements. Interns in the sector should be paid at least the national minimum wage, and ideally at least the Living Wage Foundation's Real Living Wage. The law on unpaid internships should also be strengthened, so that there is an outright ban of unpaid placements that last over four weeks; as current guidance is unclear, with

[131] Thorpe, V. (2024, April 28*). London's Central drama school axes audition fees to end elite grip on the arts.* The Observer. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/education/2024/apr/28/londons-central-drama-school-axes-audition-fees-to-end-elite-grip-on-the-arts

[132] Royal College of Music London. (N.D.). *Living Costs*. RCM.ac.uk, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://www.rcm.ac.uk/apply/feesandfunding/livingcosts/

[133] The Sutton Trust. (2024). Reforming Student Maintenance. Sutton Trust. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/reforming-student-maintenance/

many employers unsure of the legality of various types of placement under the current law.[134] The Department for Culture, Media and Sport and associated bodies like the Arts Council should monitor practice and penalise employers offering unpaid roles.

Internships are also too often informally shared amongst established communities of the creative workforce and their peers, with disadvantaged young people shut out. All internships and placements should be openly advertised, with employers working with higher education institutions and openly advertising roles online. Organisations should also look at running specific internship schemes or programmes aimed at groups who are under-represented in the sector, with employers working with relevant social mobility organisations to design effective programmes and outreach activities. Where internships are offered as part of a degree programme's 'work integrated learning', students should be given support to find placements, and inconsistency between courses should be reduced.[135] The impact of higher education placements on employment outcomes should also be considered, with evaluations shared amongst institutions, so all courses are offering impactful placements. More details on the importance of work-integrated learning can be found in *Making The Creative Majority* from the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Creative Diversity.[136]

Pay and conditions in the creative sector

Aside from internships, there are also financial barriers for socio-economically disadvantaged creatives when it comes to poorly paid short-term contracts and freelance roles. Low pay and poor conditions are closing off entry routes into the sector, even for those who have managed to complete an internship unpaid.

Employers across the creative sector should look to improve pay and conditions to make the sector more accessible. The independently led Good Work Review commissioned by the Creative Industries Policy

[134] Cullinane, C. and Montacute, R. (2018). *Pay As You Go?* Sutton Trust. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/internships-pay-as-you-go/

[135] Comunian, R. *et al.* (2023). *Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category*. APPG for Creative Diversity. Available at: www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education

[136] Comunian, R. *et al.* (2023). *Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category*. APPG for Creative Diversity. Available at: www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education

Evidence Centre (PEC) in 2022 sets out the key regulatory changes needed from the government and creative industries. This includes improving the quality of work, nurturing the workforce, strengthening employee rights, fairer rates of pay and improving welfare support available to those in-between jobs.[137] These changes are needed not just to support young people from low-income families to get into creative roles, but also to support them to stay employed in the long term. Employers should also look at providing additional financial support for those starting their career, covering costs including travel and workwear (such as bursaries, outlined in box 3).

Box 3: Bursaries case study – The Royal Television Society

The Royal Television Society (RTS) has offered bursaries through three programmes since 2013 for those interested in a career in TV, supporting nearly 350 students from low-income backgrounds. The bursaries offer £1,500 of financial support per year to undergraduate students as well as an industry mentor and free access to industry events and lectures. 82% of graduates involved in the programme have secured a role in television or other related industries.[138] These schemes are an example of how large organisations across the creative industries can support young creatives with building connections in their desired field, as well as financially, which can support young creatives to find work beyond their studies. Programmes like this should also be expanded where possible so that more disadvantaged young people can reap the benefits.

Progression and retention

Measuring the socio-economic background of the workforce is one of the first key steps in improving socio-economic diversity across an organisation**.** This is particularly important for the creative industry - given many employees incorrectly view the sector as meritocratic.[139] Seeing first-hand the issues in their own organisation can help to open-up conversations on access. The Sutton Trust has produced a guide for employers to improve social mobility in the workplace (outlined in box 4),

[137] Carey, H., Giles, L., and O'Brien, D. (2023). *Job quality in the Creative Industries The final report from the Creative PEC's Good Work Review*. Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre and Work Advance. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/research_report_entr/good-work-review/

[138] Royal Television Society. (N.D.). *RTS Bursaries*. RTS.org. Available at: https://rts.org.uk/education-and-training-pages/rts-bursaries

[139] Lampard, R. (2007). *Is Social Mobility an Echo of Educational Mobility? Parents' Educations and Occupations and Their Children's Occupational Attainment*. Sociological Research Online, 12 (1), 44 - 66. Available at: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1360780417726732

which recommends a set of questions to ask as well as advice to encourage employees to share their information, developed and endorsed by the Social Mobility Commission.[140]

Box 4: How to measure socio-economic diversity in the workplace

Measuring the socio-economic diversity of your workforce can seem more complicated than measuring other diversity characteristics, but the process is very straightforward with the right information at hand. Someone's socio-economic background is made up of several different factors. That's why we recommend asking, if possible, four different questions when looking at social mobility.

Parental occupation is one of the most important questions to ask, as extensive research has indicated it is closely related to someone's future occupation, a sign of the UK's current low levels of social mobility.[141] This should be prioritised as a key measure, alongside school type, free school meal eligibility and parental education. The Sutton Trust's Employer Guide includes detailed advice on how to ask these questions.[142] The Social Mobility Commission provides further guidance in its socio-economic diversity and inclusion toolkit for the creative industries.[143]

Looking at socio-economic background alongside other data on protected characteristics, including gender and ethnicity, allows employers to identify specific target groups for outreach and support.

Collecting this data means organisations can see where access problems are; whether it's in who they are attracting to apply; a specific stage in the application process; or in progression routes within their organisation. All employers should collect this data, with breakdowns for different seniority levels, as well as data on their class pay gap.

[140] Social Mobility Commission. (2021). *Socio-economic Diversity and Inclusion toolkit: Creative Industries.* Social Mobility Commission. Available at: https://socialmobility.independent-commission.uk/app/uploads/2023/08/SMC-Creative_Industries-Toolkit_Sept2021.pdf
[141] Lampard, R. (2007). *Is Social Mobility an Echo of Educational Mobility? Parents' Educations and Occupations and Their Children's Occupational Attainment*. Sociological Research Online, 12 (1), 44 - 66. Available at: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1360780417726732
[142] The Sutton Trust. (2020). *Social Mobility in the Workplace: An Employer's Guide.* Sutton Trust. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/social-mobility-in-the-workplace-an-employers-guide/
[143] Social Mobility Commission. (2021). *Socio-economic Diversity and Inclusion toolkit: Creative Industries.* Social Mobility Commission. Available at: https://socialmobility.independent-commission.uk/app/uploads/2023/08/SMC-Creative_Industries-Toolkit_Sept2021.pdf

Creative employers should support those taking their first steps on the career ladder by incorporating career development opportunities into roles, even if they are taken up by a freelancer. This could be through mentoring, facilitating networking and signposting to training courses(offering financial support if possible).[144] Employers should consider programmes that last several years that incorporate paid work experience and employment, so that young creatives have time to build a network of creative workers and can build up their experience without financial constraint.

Some encouraging commitments have been announced in the screen industries in 2024. For instance, The TV Foundation have launched a new social mobility Impact Unit to bring television organisations together to work towards making their industry open to all.[145] Although this unit is in its early stages, with progress reports not due until summer 2025, this is an example of how collaboration between major players in an industry can hopefully trigger significant change.

Schools and wider society

Studying creative subjects at school is a vital step to accessing creative higher education and subsequently the creative industries. Moreover, there are wider benefits of studying these subjects, including improved engagement and wellbeing.[146] Despite this, while creative subjects like music are on the national curriculum until age 14, other subjects are covered only as sub-sections of other subjects (like drama within English) and uptake of such subjects at both GCSE and A Level is declining.

Changing the curriculum

It is encouraging that the Labour party's 2024 manifesto set out the creative industries as a key part of what makes Britain 'great', with a commitment to including creative subjects in their curriculum review. Ensuring all students can access creative subjects and wider activities in schools should be a significant part of the government's ongoing curriculum review. Given the importance of a creative education to

[144] The Bridge Group. (2023). *Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit*. Screen Industries Growth Network (SIGN) and University of York. Available at: https://screen-network.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/57286-NEW-Inclusive-Recruitment-Toolkit-web.pdf

[145] Edinburgh TV Festival. (2024). *TV Foundation Unveils New Subdivision Inspired by James Graham's MacTaggart Lecture: The Impact Unit*. The TV Festival, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://www.thetvfestival.com/news/tv-foundation-unveils-new-subdivision-inspired-by-james-grahams-mactaggart-lecture-the-impact-unit/

[146] Williams, J. *et al.* (2022). *Enhancing Creative Education*. Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/PEC-report-Enhancing-Creative-Education-FINAL.pdf

accessing a creative degree and the creative industries, as well as the wider benefits of creative subjects to all pupils, creative subjects should be taught from Key Stage 1 all the way to Key Stage 4. All students should also be able to study at least one creative subject to Level 3 if they wish to, with creative subjects and careers incorporated into a school's careers guidance offer.

A notable implication for schools when considering what subjects to offer is the English Baccalaureate. As creative subjects are not currently featured, schools working towards Baccalaureate targets are more inclined to focus on other subjects. Initially, evidence did not indicate that the EBacc was leading to declines in uptake of arts-based GCSESs (in fact there was a small increase between 2012 and 2016)[147] – however, there have since been clear declines in recent years. [148]

Schools should be incentivised to offer creative subjects, for instance incorporating creative subjects as a required component for Progress 8 attainment scores. Indeed, in 2023, the Labour party pledged to ensure that a creative or a vocational subject should contribute to every pupil's Progress 8 score.[149] Making a change like this would encourage schools to broaden their curriculum and offer creative subjects to more pupils.

To ensure the government can fulfil their planned improvements to creative education, schools should be fully resourced to be able to offer creative subjects at all key stages. That includes provision of teachers, with declines seen in teachers for creative subjects. In 2023/24, just 44% of arts and design teachers were recruited towards the government targets set for that year.[150] Improving the number of teachers in creative subjects needs to be tackled as part of the subject-wide teacher recruitment crisis the country currently faces. The Sutton Trust has previously called for increased investment in continuing professional development, as well as incentivising the best teachers to work in the most disadvantaged

[147] Staufenberg, J. (2017, February 8). *EBacc 'increases arts subject entries' but teacher numbers fall*. Schools Week. Available at: https://schoolsweek.co.uk/ebacc-increases-arts-subject-entries-but-teacher-numbers-fall/

[148] Department for Education. (2016). *DfE strategy 2015 to 2020: world-class education and care*. Gov.uk. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dfe-strategy-2015-to-2020-world-class-education-and-care

[149] The Labour Party. (2024). Creating Growth: Labour's plan for the Arts, Culture and Creative industries. Labour Party. Available at: https://labour.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Labours-Arts-Culture-Creative-Industries-Sector-Plan.pdf

[150] Martin, M. (2023, December 7). *Revealed: secondary ITT target missed by half*. TES. Available at: https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/teacher-trainee-recruitment-itt-target-missed-half

schools.[151] For creative subjects specifically, training bursaries could be considered, as is the case with some STEM subjects.[152]

Extra-curricular access in schools

Aside from core subjects taught at school, changes are needed to ensure all young people are able can access creative extracurricular activities, including learning an instrument and drama classes. This report has identified a particular class crisis in music, with the majority of elite figures in the classical music industry attending private schools. The art of playing an instrument requires many years of practice and lessons but outside of school, private lessons can be expensive, with the cost of instruments themselves another financial barrier.

Music Education Hubs, funded by the Arts Council (via £541 million from the Department for Education since 2016), have made notable contributions in opening music education to a wider socio-economic pool of young people. The hubs work with local schools to connect them to local services and specialist music teachers.[153] However, when they were in opposition, Labour criticised the hubs for being fragmented and inequitable.[154] Current provisions subsidising music lessons are variable across local authorities.

A £6 million pilot programme launched in September 2024 to fund music lessons for disadvantaged and SEND students, as announced in the previous government's National Plan for Music Education in 2022, is an encouraging start. [155] The government should look to introduce an 'arts premium' for schools, so they can pay for arts opportunities, including music lessons. This funding should be targeted at lower income young people, as they are the least likely to be able to afford these opportunities

"Visiting places like the theatre with school may be the only way disadvantaged young people can see such places, if their parents or guardians are unable to afford to go, or if such venues are not reachable locally."

[151] The Sutton Trust. (2024). Fair Opportunity for All. Sutton Trust. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/fair-opportunity-for-all/

[152] Cultural Learning Alliance. (2023, February 20). Arts recruitment and retention. Cultural Learning Alliance. Available at: https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/arts-recruitment-and-retention/#:~:text=Improving%20teacher%20pay%20%E2%80%93%20The%20evidence,on%20recruitment%20to%20arts%20subjects.

[153] Arts Council England. (N.D.). *Music Hubs*. Arts Council England, accessed 7th October 2024. Available at: https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/MusicEducationHubs

[154] The Labour Party. (2024). Creating Growth: Labour's plan for the Arts, Culture and Creative industries. Labour Party. Available at: https://labour.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Labours-Arts-Culture-Creative-Industries-Sector-Plan.pdf

[155] Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Department for Education and Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport. (2022). *The power of music to change lives: a national plan for music education*. Gov.uk. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-power-of-music-to-change-lives-a-national-plan-for-music-education

outside of school. Alongside this, the government's planned National Music Education Network, which aims to improve guidance on a musical career to young people, parents and teachers with signposting to local schemes and services like instrument banks (where instruments can be borrowed for free,[156] should prioritise disadvantaged areas in any phased rollout of the programme.

Investing in the arts

Changing access to music lessons is just one key example of how the arts can be made accessible to all young people. Evidence highlighted in this report shows taking part in creative activities and visiting such settings can be transformative for young people, inspiring them to take a creative path and building their knowledge of a creative sector from a young age. But despite this, between 2009/10 and 2022/23, local authority spending on culture and related services in England has seen a real-terms cut of 48%.[157].

Funding should be made available for school trips to creative and cultural venues, with the aim for every state school student to have access to at least one creative trip or activity a year. Visiting places like the theatre with school may be the only way disadvantaged young people can see such places, if their parents or guardians are unable to afford to go, or if such venues are not reachable locally. It is therefore concerning that many state schools are unable to afford such activities. Indeed, research from the Sutton Trust has found that last academic year, 50% of senior leaders had made cuts to school trips and outings, with disadvantaged schools more likely to do so.[158] Schools can charge for some trips, notably those outside of the school day, but those from families who cannot afford to pay should not be excluded from these opportunities. Schools should have enough funding to be able to subsidise costs for all students eligible for free school meals and, where possible, trips should be entirely funded by the school.

The government should also review arts funding overall, through local government funding and funding given from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to bodies like Arts Council England, with any improvements targeted at disadvantaged areas first, who have seen larger

[156] The Labour Party. (2024). *Change: Labour party manifesto 2024*. Labour Party. Available at: https://labour.org.uk/change/

[157] Ashton, H. *et al.* (2024). *The state of the Arts*. Campaign for the Arts & Centre for Cultural and Media Policy Studies, University of Warwick. Available at: https://www.campaignforthearts.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/The-State-of-the-Arts.pdf

[158] The Sutton Trust. (2024). *School Funding and Pupil Premium 2024*. Sutton Trust. Available at: https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/school-funding-and-pupil-premium-2024/

cuts to arts spending and have fewer cultural venues. Previous funding initiatives, such as Arts Council England's "priority places" (a package offered to around 100 local areas as part of the previous government's levelling up fund), have been highly competitive, with recipients only receiving funding for a set period rather than the long-term investment required to make real change.[159] Creative organisations should be consulted on any funding changes so that those who are struggling financially are getting the correct support they need to survive.[160] The Fabian Society have put forward several options for reforming arts funding, particularly centring around the Arts Council England and how the Council works with local and regional leaders to meet the needs of communities.[161] The Arts Council have also set out a 10-year strategy to 2030, *Let's Create*, which acknowledges that to deliver a creative economy that allows everyone to flourish, careers in the arts should be financially viable for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.[162]

"The class crisis in the creative industries has been apparent for decades, and while universities and creative employers have made notable efforts in diversifying the arts, the data in this report shows there is a fair way to go."

Recent actions from established arts organisations to open settings outside of London, such as The Brit School expanding to a second site in Bradford[163] and the English National Opera House moving to Manchester, are encouraging.[164] But sustained funding will be required to ensure these settings can remain open for the long-term, and business strategies should work towards a legacy of improving participation in the arts in the city and surrounding areas, particularly amongst those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds. These interventions should be evaluated to provide evidence on what works that can be shared with other cities across the country.

[159] Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Arts Council England. (2022, February 23). *Over 100 places to see improved access to culture and arts across England*. Gov.uk. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/over-100-places-to-see-improved-access-to-culture-and-arts-across-england

[160] Di Novo, S. and Easton, E. (2023). *A new deal for arts funding in England?* Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre. Available at: https://pec.ac.uk/blog_entries/a-new-deal-for-arts-funding-in-england/

[161] Cole, A., Lloyd, N., and Dodd, F. (2024). *Arts for us all: Putting culture and creativity at the heart of national renewal*. Fabian Society. Available at: https://fabians.org.uk/publication/arts-for-us-all/

[162] Arts Council. (2020). *Lets Create: Our Strategy 2020-2030*. Arts Council. Available at: https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/our-strategy-2020-2030

[163] Davies, C. (2023, August 20). *Brit school plan for northern England gets go-ahead*. The Guardian. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/aug/20/brit-school-plan-for-northern-england-bradford-gets-go-ahead

[164] Brown, M. (2023, December 5). *English National Opera announces Greater Manchester will be its new home*. The Guardian. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/music/2023/dec/05/english-national-opera-announces-greater-manchester-will-be-its-new-home

In summary

A wide range of policy recommendations have been put forward here, demonstrating that to make notable improvements to social mobility in the creative industries, action is needed across the board. The class crisis in the creative industries has been apparent for decades, and while universities and creative employers have made notable efforts in diversifying the arts, the data in this report shows there is a fair way to go. There is only so much higher education institutions and employers can do to diversify their cohorts if from an early age, disadvantaged young people are shut out from unaffordable private lessons and visits to cultural settings. From early years education to recruitment and retention from creative employers, a joined-up approach is urgently required to get real change in the sector.

Appendices

Appendix A: Variable transformation notes

- Institutions have been grouped together into five main groups: Oxbridge, Russell Group, Pre-92, Specialist, and Post-92. Birkbeck College and the Open University has been removed from analysis due to very small fractions of students at those institutions who start higher education within the three years after completing their post-16 education. The full list of each institution in each category is in Appendix C Table C.1. Whilst there are important differences and distinctions within these groups, they allow the analysis to show the broad patterns across the sector, without disclosing an individual university's data.

- We follow Comunian et al's (2023) definition of creative courses. Programme codes have been grouped together into simpler categories, including "STEM", "Games", "Art", etc. For data prior to the 2019/2020 academic year, this was based on JACS codes for data from 2019/2020 onwards, these are based on HECoS codes. The comparisons can be found in appendices table C.2 (JACS) and C.3 (HECOS).

- We have two key measures of social origin: NS-SEC, collected by and available through UCAS, and school type. Neither of these is a perfect measure; in particular, there are significant missing responses on both measures. In both cases, this is mostly accounted for by international and mature students who are not included in these measures; however, in the case of school type, there is missingness beyond this. For this reason, we highlight the percentages of students whose school type is unknown in our initial analysis.

- The report focuses on comparing and contrasting students from NS-SEC I, higher managerial and professional social origins– described as 'upper-middle-class' students – with those from NS-SEC VI-VII, routine, manual and long-term unemployed origins – described here as 'working-class' students.

- The categories for the socio-economic background of the parent have been grouped together. NS-SEC categories I and II are kept distinct, while NS-SEC III-V and NS-SEC VI-VIII have each been

grouped together. Cases where socio-economic background is absent (either unknown or not classified) have been dropped from analysis.

- For school type, the report compares students from state schools (including state-funded grammars) with those who attended private schools.

- As we have already noted, neither of these is a perfect measure, and more granular data would always be welcome. However, both measures give an excellent indication of the broader trends and patterns for entry to creative HE courses.

- We have no information on individuals who are not attending university, and so all comparisons and proportions discussed in the report are for students on HE courses.

Appendix B

Table B.1: Percentages of students in Music, Drama, and Art, by ethnic group, sex, and NS-SEC

	Origin	Asian		Black		Mixed		Other		White	
Subject	Gender	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Music	NS-SEC I	0.26	0.2	0.2	0.23	0.74	0.69	0.05	0.06	12.38	12.73
	NS-SEC II	0.18	0.23	0.45	0.53	0.92	0.84	0.06	0.08	13.75	14.7
	NS-SEC III-V	0.25	0.23	0.31	0.41	0.59	0.54	0.08	0.08	10.59	10.71
	NS-SEC VI-VIII	0.16	0.21	0.38	0.53	0.48	0.61	0.04	0.09	6.71	7.71
Drama	NS-SEC I	0.18	0.08	0.33	0.17	0.73	0.31	0.07	xxx	15.3	6.32
	NS-SEC II	0.23	0.11	0.82	0.44	1.07	0.47	0.09	xxx	18.52	8.35
	NS-SEC III-V	0.3	0.18	0.65	0.33	0.84	0.36	0.11	xxx	15.21	6.91
	NS-SEC VI-VIII	0.37	0.21	1.03	0.56	0.87	0.33	0.13	xxx	11.84	6.01
Art	NS-SEC I	0.48	0.09	0.19	0.07	1	0.24	0.11	xxx	17.16	4.06
	NS-SEC II	0.58	0.16	0.48	0.16	1.15	0.34	0.11	xxx	19.66	5.25
	NS-SEC III-V	0.9	0.16	0.4	0.15	1.03	0.31	0.21	xxx	17.97	4.49

	NS-SEC VI-VIII	0.94	0.21	0.55	0.26	1.06	0.3	0.21	xxx	15.57	3.82
All other subjects	NS-SEC I	1.27	1.31	0.47	0.43	0.66	0.62	0.18	0.2	10.82	9.78
	NS-SEC II	1.26	1.2	1.03	0.78	0.68	0.54	0.15	0.14	11.24	8.69
	NS-SEC III-V	2.33	2.18	1.43	0.84	0.63	0.47	0.26	0.22	11.3	7.5
	NS-SEC VI-VIII	2.01	1.75	1.66	1.02	0.6	0.38	0.28	0.21	8.54	4.92

Table B.2: Percentages of students in Music, Drama, and Art, by ethnic group, sex, and school type

	Origin	Asian		Black		Mixed		Other		White	
Subject	Gender	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Music	Other /Unknown	0.05	0.1	0.12	0.2	0.25	0.21	0.03	0.06	2.66	3.14
	Private	0.19	0.18	0.09	0.13	0.49	0.39	0.03	0.04	5.38	4.93
	State	0.65	0.74	1.26	1.7	2.12	2.18	0.2	0.3	33.93	38.24
Drama	Other /Unknown	0.06	0.03	0.12	0.12	0.2	0.07	0.03	xxx	2.4	1.23
	Private	0.06	0.03	0.19	0.14	0.34	0.16	0.05	xxx	5.01	2.16
	State	1.03	0.54	2.7	1.46	3.16	1.39	0.36	xxx	52.27	24.49
Art	Other /Unknown	0.26	0.09	0.09	0.07	0.25	0.07	xxx	xxx	5.05	2.09
	Private	0.15	0.01	0.05	0.04	0.22	0.09	xxx	xxx	2.74	0.79
	State	2.74	0.6	1.45	0.56	3.72	1	xxx	xxx	61.34	15.57
All other subjects	Other /Unknown	0.66	0.54	0.78	0.52	0.29	0.2	0.17	0.15	6.1	4.01
	Private	0.44	0.48	0.12	0.1	0.24	0.24	0.05	0.05	3.11	3.19
	State	5.57	5.04	3.87	2.5	1.95	1.42	0.77	0.64	33.45	23.35

Figure B.1: Class origins of all creative subjects by university type

Appendix C

Table C.1: List of Universities and University types

The University of Cambridge	Oxbridge	Royal Academy of Dramatic Art	Specialist	Cardiff University	Russell Group
The University of Oxford	Oxbridge	Royal Academy of Music	Specialist	Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	Russell Group
Arts University Plymouth	Specialist	Royal College of Art	Specialist	King's College London	Russell Group
Conservatoire for Dance and Drama	Specialist	Royal College of Music	Specialist	London School of Economics and Political Science	Russell Group
Courtauld Institute of Art	Specialist	Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	Specialist	Newcastle University	Russell Group
Glasgow School of Art	Specialist	Royal Northern College of Music	Specialist	Queen Mary University of London	Russell Group
Guildhall School of Music and Drama	Specialist	The Arts University Bournemouth	Specialist	Queen's University Belfast	Russell Group
LAMDA Limited	Specialist	The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts	Specialist	The University of Birmingham	Russell Group
Leeds Arts University	Specialist	The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama	Specialist	The University of Bristol	Russell Group
Leeds Conservatoire	Specialist	Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance	Specialist	The University of Edinburgh	Russell Group
Norwich University of the Arts	Specialist	University for the Creative Arts	Specialist	The University of Exeter	Russell Group
Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance	Specialist	University of the Arts, London	Specialist	The University of Glasgow	Russell Group

The University of Leeds	Russell Group	Cranfield University	Pre-92	The University of Buckingham	Pre-92
The University of Manchester	Russell Group	City, University of London	Pre-92	The University of Dundee	Pre-92
The University of Liverpool	Russell Group	Goldsmiths College	Pre-92	The University of East Anglia	Pre-92
The University of Sheffield	Russell Group	Heriot-Watt University	Pre-92	The University of Essex	Pre-92
The University of Southampton	Russell Group	Keele University	Pre-92	The University of Hull	Pre-92
The University of Warwick	Russell Group	Loughborough University	Pre-92	The University of Kent	Pre-92
The University of York	Russell Group	Royal Agricultural University	Pre-92	The University of Lancaster	Pre-92
University College London	Russell Group	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College	Pre-92	The University of Leicester	Pre-92
University of Durham	Russell Group	SOAS University of London	Pre-92	The University of Reading	Pre-92
University of Nottingham	Russell Group	St George's, University of London	Pre-92	The University of Salford	Pre-92
Aberystwyth University	Pre-92	Swansea University	Pre-92	The University of St. Andrews	Pre-92
Aston University	Pre-92	The Royal Veterinary College	Pre-92	The University of Stirling	Pre-92
Bangor University	Pre-92	The University of Aberdeen	Pre-92	The University of Strathclyde	Pre-92
Birkbeck College	Pre-92	The University of Bath	Pre-92	The University of Surrey	Pre-92
Brunel University London	Pre-92	The University of Bradford	Pre-92	The University of Sussex	Pre-92

Ulster University	Pre-92	Glasgow Caledonian University	Post-92	Middlesex University	Post-92
University of London (Institutes and activities)	Pre-92	Glyndŵr University	Post-92	Newman University	Post-92
AECC University College	Post-92	Gower College Swansea	Post-92	Oxford Brookes University	Post-92
Abertay University	Post-92	Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	Post-92	Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh	Post-92
Anglia Ruskin University	Post-92	Grŵp NPTC Group	Post-92	Ravensbourne University London	Post-92
Bath Spa University	Post-92	Harper Adams University	Post-92	Robert Gordon University	Post-92
Birmingham City University	Post-92	Hartpury University	Post-92	Roehampton University	Post-92
Bishop Grosseteste University	Post-92	Heythrop College	Post-92	SRUC	Post-92
Bournemouth University	Post-92	Kingston University	Post-92	Sheffield Hallam University	Post-92
Buckinghamshire New University	Post-92	Leeds Beckett University	Post-92	Solent University	Post-92
Canterbury Christ Church University	Post-92	Leeds Trinity University	Post-92	St Mary's University College	Post-92
Cardiff Metropolitan University	Post-92	Liverpool Hope University	Post-92	St Mary's University, Twickenham	Post-92
Coventry University	Post-92	Liverpool John Moores University	Post-92	Staffordshire University	Post-92
De Montfort University	Post-92	The University of West London	Post-92	University of Plymouth	Post-92
Edge Hill University	Post-92	The University of Westminster	Post-92	University of South Wales	Post-92

Stranmillis University College	Post-92	London Metropolitan University	Post-92	University of Wales Trinity Saint David	Post-92
Teesside University	Post-92	London South Bank University	Post-92	University of Worcester	Post-92
The Manchester Metropolitan University	Post-92	The University of Winchester	Post-92	University of the Highlands and Islands	Post-92
The Nottingham Trent University	Post-92	The University of Wolverhampton	Post-92	University of the West of England, Bristol	Post-92
The University College of Osteopathy	Post-92	The University of the West of Scotland	Post-92	Writtle University College	Post-92
The University of Brighton	Post-92	University College Birmingham	Post-92	York St John University	Post-92
The University of Central Lancashire	Post-92	University of Bedfordshire	Post-92		
The University of Chichester	Post-92	University of Chester	Post-92		
The University of East London	Post-92	University of Cumbria	Post-92		
The University of Greenwich	Post-92	University of Derby	Post-92		
The University of Huddersfield	Post-92	University of Gloucestershire	Post-92		
The University of Lincoln	Post-92	University of Hertfordshire	Post-92		
The University of Northampton	Post-92	University of Northumbria at Newcastle	Post-92		
The University of Portsmouth	Post-92	University of St Mark and St John	Post-92		
The University of Sunderland	Post-92	University of Suffolk	Post-92		

Table C.2: List of creative subjects and subject codes (JACS)

Category	JACS code	JACS label	Category	JACS code	JACS label
Architecture	**K100**	Architecture	Art	**W130**	Sculpture
Architecture	**K110**	Architectural design theory	Art	**W140**	Printmaking
Architecture	**K120**	Interior architecture	Art	**W160**	Fine art conservation
Architecture	**K130**	Architectural technology	Art	**W190**	Fine art not elsewhere classified
Architecture	**K190**	Architecture not elsewhere classified	Creative writing	**W800**	Imaginative writing
Architecture	**K300**	Landscape & garden design	Creative writing	**W810**	Scriptwriting
Architecture	**K310**	Landscape architecture	Creative writing	**W820**	Poetry writing
Architecture	**K320**	Landscape studies	Creative writing	**W830**	Prose writing
Architecture	**K340**	Garden design	Creative writing	**W890**	Imaginative writing not elsewhere classified
Art	**W100**	Fine art	Dance	**W500**	Dance
Art	**W110**	Drawing	Dance	**W510**	Choreography
Art	**W120**	Painting	Dance	**W540**	Types of dance
Dance	**W543**	Contemporary dance	Design	**W220**	Illustration

Dance	**W550**	Dance performance	Design	**W230**	Clothing/fashion design
Dance	**W590**	Dance not elsewhere classified	Design	**W231**	Textile design
Design	**J400**	Polymers & textiles	Design	**W240**	Industrial/product design
Design	**J410**	Polymers technology	Design	**W250**	Interior design
Design	**J420**	Textiles technology	Design	**W260**	Furniture design
Design	**J430**	Leather technology	Design	**W270**	Ceramics design
Design	**J440**	Clothing production	Design	**W280**	Interactive & electronic design
Design	**J443**	Pattern cutting	Design	**W290**	Design studies not elsewhere classified
Design	**J445**	Footwear production	Design	**W700**	Crafts
Design	**W200**	Design studies	Design	**W720**	Metal crafts
Design	**W210**	Graphic design	Design	**W721**	Silversmithing/goldsmithing
Design	**W211**	Typography	Design	**W723**	Clock/watchmaking
Design	**W212**	Multimedia design	Design	**W730**	Wood crafts
Design	**W213**	Visual communication	Design	**W740**	Surface decoration
Design	**W762**	Thatching	Drama	**W461**	Stage design

Design	**W770**	Glass crafts	Drama	**W470**	Performance & live arts
Drama	**W400**	Drama	Drama	**W472**	Circus arts
Drama	**W410**	Acting	Drama	**W473**	Community theatre
Drama	**W420**	Directing for theatre	Drama	**W490**	Drama not elsewhere classified
Drama	**W430**	Producing for theatre	Games	**I600**	Games
Drama	**W440**	Theatre studies	Games	**I610**	Computer games programming
Drama	**W441**	Theatre & professional practice	Games	**I620**	Computer games design
Drama	**W442**	Contemporary theatre	Games	**I630**	Computer games graphics
Drama	**W443**	Technical arts & special effects for theatre	Journalism	**P500**	Journalism
Drama	**W450**	Stage management	Journalism	**P510**	Factual reporting
Drama	**W451**	Theatrical wardrobe design	Journalism	**P590**	Journalism not elsewhere classified
Drama	**W452**	Theatrical make-up	Media production	**I700**	Computer generated visual & audio effects
Drama	**W453**	Technical stage management	Media production	**I710**	Computer generated imagery
Drama	**W460**	Theatre design	Media production	**P310**	Media production
Media production	**P311**	Television production	Music	**W300**	Music

Media production	**P312**	Radio production	Music	**W310**	Musicianship/performance studies
Media production	**P313**	Film production	Music	**W311**	Instrumental or vocal performance
Media production	**W600**	Cinematics & photography	Music	**W312**	Musical theatre
Media production	**W610**	Moving image techniques	Music	**W314**	Jazz performance
Media production	**W611**	Directing motion pictures	Music	**W315**	Popular music performance
Media production	**W612**	Producing motion pictures	Music	**W317**	Historical performance practice
Media production	**W613**	Film & sound recording	Music	**W320**	Music education/teaching
Media production	**W614**	Visual & audio effects	Music	**W330**	History of music
Media production	**W615**	Animation techniques	Music	**W340**	Types of music
Media production	**W620**	Cinematography	Music	**W341**	Popular music
Media production	**W630**	History of cinematics & photography	Music	**W342**	Film music/screen music
Media production	**W631**	History of cinematics	Music	**W343**	Jazz
Media production	**W640**	Photography	Music	**W344**	Folk music
Media production	**W690**	Cinematics & photography not elsewhere classified	Music	**W346**	Sacred music
Music	**W350**	Musicology	Music	**W388**	Popular music composition

Music	**W351**	Ethnomusicology/world music	Music	**W390**	Music not elsewhere classified
Music	**W355**	Music psychology	Music technology	**J930**	Audio technology
Music	**W380**	Composition	Music technology	**J931**	Music recording
Music	**W381**	Electracoustic composition/acousmatic composition	Music technology	**W370**	Music technology & industry
Music	**W382**	Sonic arts	Music technology	**W371**	Sound design/commercial music recording
Music	**W383**	Electronic music	Music technology	**W372**	Creative music technology
Music	**W384**	Applied music/musicianship	Music technology	**W374**	Music production
Music	**W385**	Commercial music composition	Music technology	**W375**	Music management/music industry management/arts management
Music	**W386**	Multimedia music composition	Music technology	**W376**	Music marketing

Table C.3: List of creative subjects and subject codes (HECOS)

Category	HECoS code	HECoS label	Category	HECoS code	HECoS label
Architecture	**100583**	architectural design	Dance	**100711**	choreography
Architecture	**100122**	architecture	Dance	**100885**	ballet
Architecture	**100121**	architectural technology	Design	**100061**	graphic design
Art	**100059**	fine art	Design	**100062**	illustration
Art	**100587**	drawing	Design	**100632**	visual communication
Art	**100592**	sculpture	Design	**100055**	fashion design
Art	**100595**	printmaking	Design	**100054**	fashion
Art	**100589**	painting	Design	**100050**	product design
Dance	**100068**	dance	Design	**100051**	textile design
Dance	**100712**	dance performance	Design	**101316**	interior design and architecture
Dance	**101454**	community dance	Design	**100048**	design
Dance	**100886**	contemporary dance	Design	**100375**	web and multimedia design

Design	**100636**	interactive and electronic design	Drama	**100700**	theatre production
Design	**100060**	graphic arts	Drama	**100702**	technical theatre studies
Design	**100633**	furniture design and making	Drama	**100697**	directing for theatre
Design	**100630**	typography	Games	**101268**	computer games design
Design	**100003**	ceramics	Games	**101020**	computer games programming
Design	**100052**	ergonomics	Games	**101267**	computer games
Drama	**100703**	stage management	Games	**101019**	computer games graphics
Drama	**100698**	theatre studies	Journalism	**100442**	journalism
Drama	**100067**	acting	Journalism	**100445**	multimedia journalism
Drama	**100069**	drama	Journalism	**100439**	broadcast journalism
Drama	**100710**	community theatre	Media production	**100441**	film production
Drama	**100704**	technical stage management	Media production	**100057**	animation
Drama	**100705**	theatrical wardrobe design	Media production	**100716**	cinematography
Drama	**100708**	stage design	Media production	**100924**	radio production
Drama	**100707**	circus arts	Media production	**100890**	film and sound recording

Media production	**100887**	moving image techniques	Music	**100643**	music and arts management
Media production	**100363**	computer animation and visual effects	Music	**100657**	popular music performance
Media production	**101214**	cinematics	Music	**101449**	music theory and analysis
Media production	**100923**	television production	Music	**100862**	sonic arts
Media production	**100443**	media production	Music	**100656**	jazz performance
Media production	**100063**	photography	Music	**100854**	community music
Media production	**100888**	film directing	Music	**100639**	instrumental or vocal performance
Media production	**100717**	visual and audio effects	Music	**100667**	musicology
Music	**100070**	music	Music	**100842**	film music and screen music
Music	**100867**	electronic music	Music	**101451**	popular music composition
Music	**100035**	musical theatre	Music	**101450**	applied music and musicianship
Music	**100843**	jazz	Music	**100642**	music education and teaching
Music	**100841**	popular music	Music	**100674**	ethnomusicology and world music
Music	**100637**	musicianship and performance studies	Music	**101448**	opera
Music	**100695**	music composition	Music	**101447**	folk music

Music	**100661**	historical performance practice	Music technology	**100222**	audio technology
Music technology	**100223**	music production	Music technology	**100221**	music technology

Table C.4: SOC2010 codes for core creative occupations and other creative occupations

Core Creative occupations			
2451	Librarians	**3413**	Actors, entertainers and presenters
2452	Archivists and curators	**3414**	Dancers and choreographers
2471	Journalists, newspaper and periodical editors	**3415**	Musicians
3411	Artists	**3416**	Arts officers, producers and directors
3412	Authors, writers and translators	**3417**	Photographers, audio-visual and broadcasting equipment operator
Non-core creative occupations			
1132	Marketing and sales directors	**3421**	Graphic designers
1134	Advertising and public relations directors	**3422**	Product, clothing and related designers
2431	Architects	**3543**	Marketing associate professionals
2432	Town planning officers	**5211**	Smiths and forge workers

2435	Chartered architectural technologists	**5411**	Weavers and knitters
2472	'Public relations professionals	**5441**	Glass and ceramics makers, decor
2473	'Advertising accounts managers and creative directors	**5442**	Furniture makers and other craft
3121	Architectural and town planning technicians	**5449**	'Other skilled trades n.e.c'

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