Film Employer Panel
Creative Skillset
March 2014

Contents

Employer Panel Results: Film

1. Executive Summary

Creative Skillset invited members of the Film Employer panel to participate in a series of surveys on issues affecting the film industry including skills needs, training needs, investment opportunities and diversity. Surveys took place in June 2013, October 2013 and February 2014.

- 79% of companies/productions reported that they do not currently have any vacancies that are proving hard to fill, compared with 18% that do. Amongst the most common hard-to-fill vacancies reported were script editors, producers and production accountants.

- A minority of respondents reported significant skills gaps within their current workforce. These gaps related to prosthetics, sound recording and pre-visualisation.

- Respondents emphasised the effectiveness of on-the-job learning with 66% indicating that such a route leaves individuals very prepared to work in the industry. Film school and apprenticeships were also seen as effectively preparing individuals for work in the industry

- 60% of companies indicated that they would be potentially interested in strategic training partnerships with other businesses, i.e. sharing training schemes/resources with other companies.

- 62% of companies have not taken on apprentices but would consider doing so in the future. The most common reasons for not taking them on is a preference for recruiting fully trained/qualified recruits and a lack of understanding over how the process works.

- 79% of companies currently have a diversity/equality/inclusion/equal opportunities policy. In addition, over 50% of companies indicated that they currently monitor the levels of employment of women, BAME, disabled and LGBT individuals within their workforce.

- Just over half of the respondents were aware of Creative Skillset's Trainee Finder programme. However, 30% indicated that they did not plan to sign up to the programme citing a lack of requirement and company size as reasons. The majority of companies had never heard of Challenge Fund or Commissioned Training; only 6% of respondents indicated that were signed up to the database.

2. Panel Responses by Nation
### Figure 1: Number of Panel Respondents by Nation
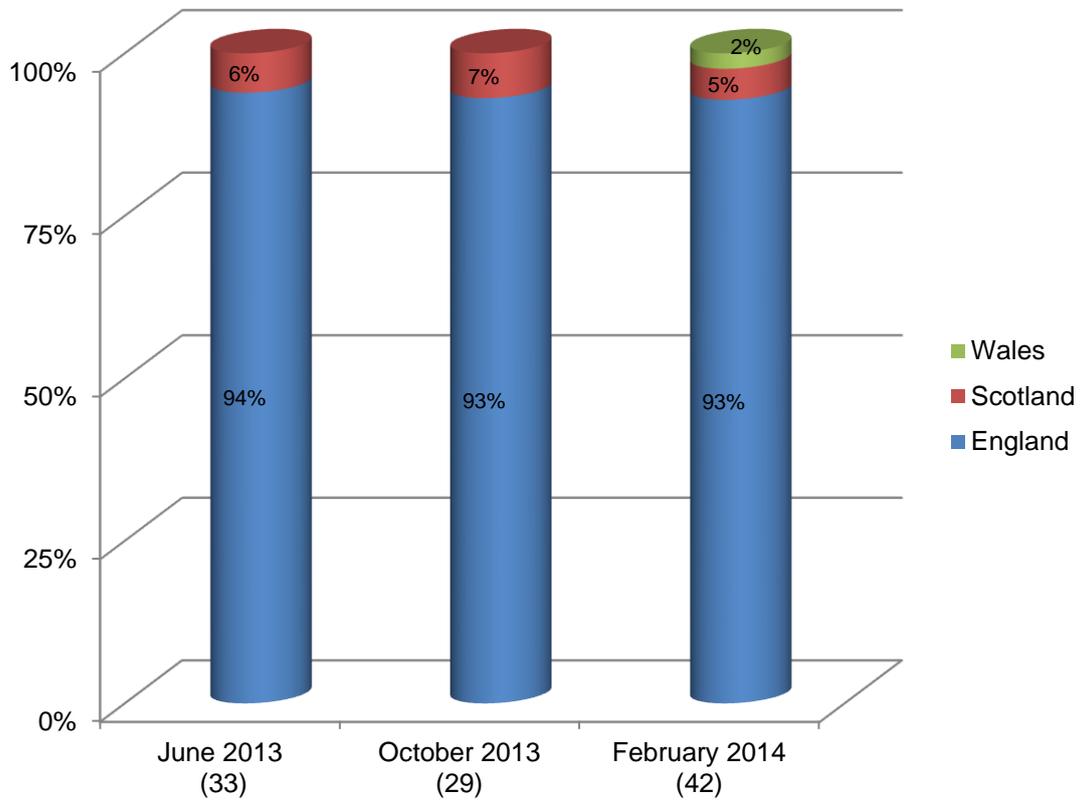
3. Skills

3a. Does your company/production currently have any vacancies that are proving hard to fill?
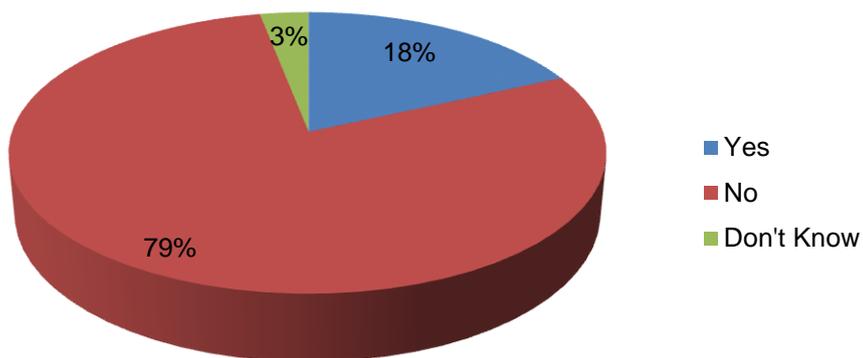

Panel: June 2013 Responses: 33

3b. To what extent does your company have vacancies that are proving hard to fill in the following areas?

	To a great extent	To some extent	To a lesser extent	Not at all	Not relevant	Don't know
3D Rigging		3%		35%	56%	6%
Script supervisors		15%	15%	31%	36%	3%
Script Editors	3%	24%	3%	39%	31%	
Studio management	3%		6%	36%	55%	
Digital asset management	6%	3%	15%	32%	44%	
DITs	6%	9%	12%	35%	35%	3%
Steadicam		3%	12%	46%	39%	
Costume Supervisors		6%	15%	35%	44%	
Assistant Production Accountants	9%	9%	15%	29%	35%	3%
Production Accountants	9%	12%	3%	43%	33%	
1st ADs	6%	9%	9%	38%	38%	
Line Producer	6%	9%	18%	41%	26%	
Production Manager	3%	12%	12%	42%	31%	
Producer	9%	12%	12%	39%	27%	

Panel: February 2014 Responses: 34

For a list of specific occupations that are proving hard to fill see Appendix A.

3c. To what extent is your company experiencing the following skills gaps within your current workforce?
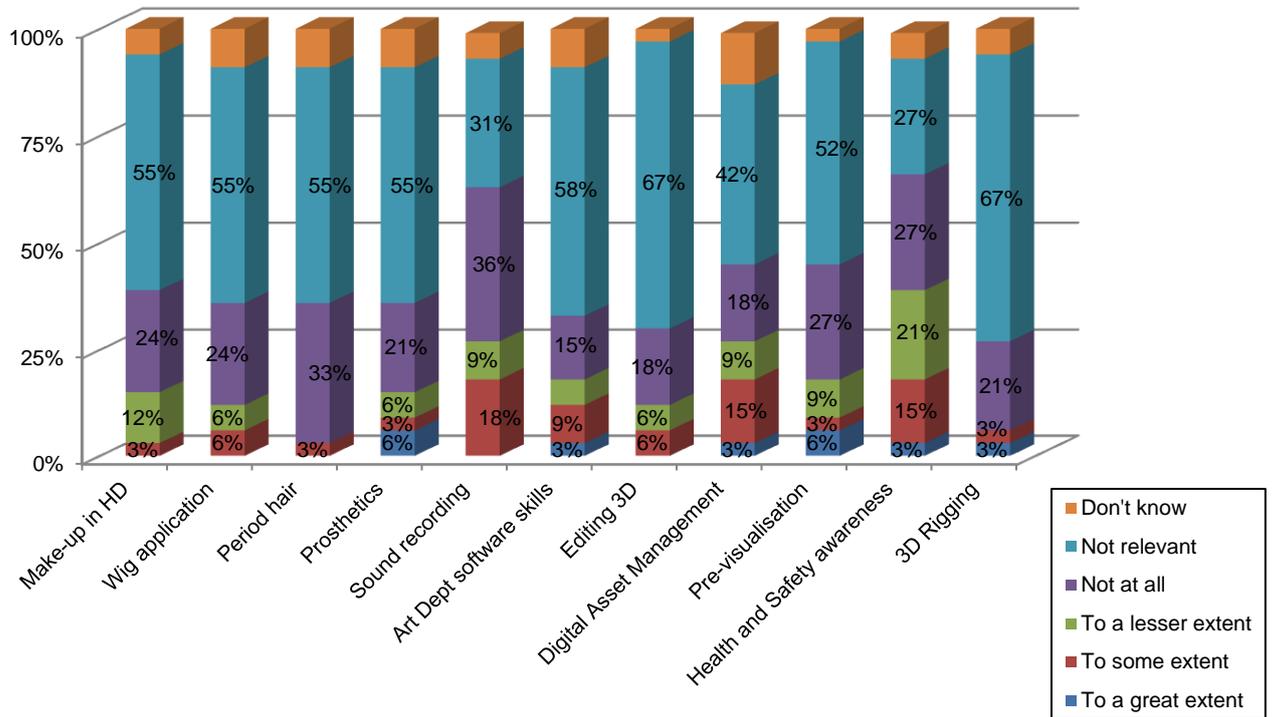
Panel: February 2014 Responses: 33

For a list of additional skills gaps identified by respondents see Appendix A.

3d. In your experience, which entry routes into the industry have led to individuals being best prepared for their work?
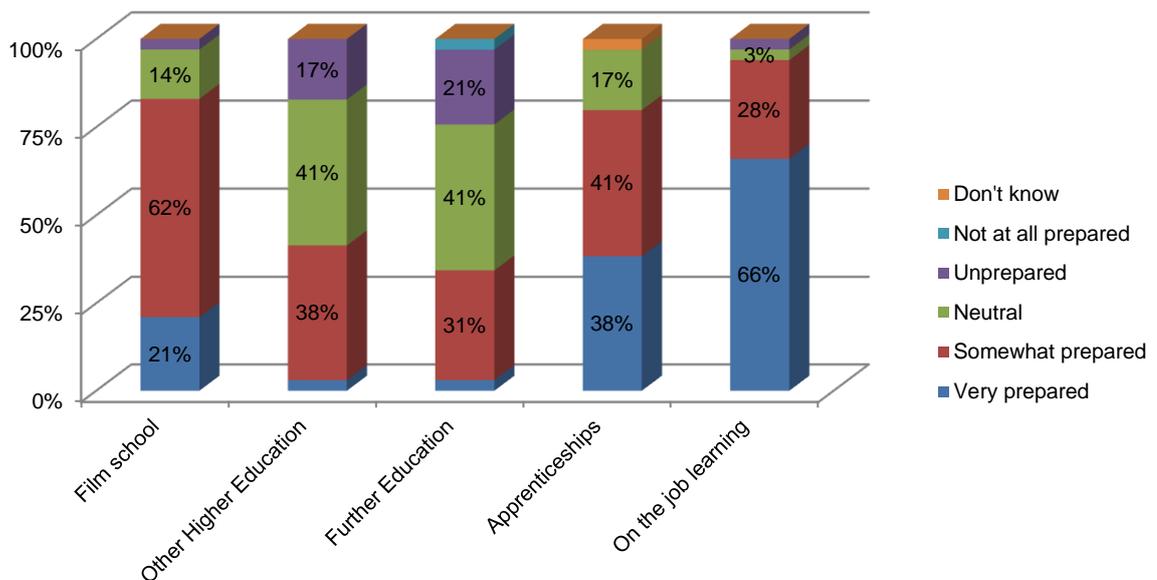
Panel: October 2013 Responses: 29

For a list of additional entry routes identified by respondents see Appendix A.

3e. What skills do you think film schools should be teaching over the next five years?
Respondents highlighted an array of skill areas including professionalism, marketing and business awareness, film-making economics, and practical and technical skills. For full results see Appendix A.

3f. The statements below have all been cited as potential impacts of digitisation on the film industry over the next ten years. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement.
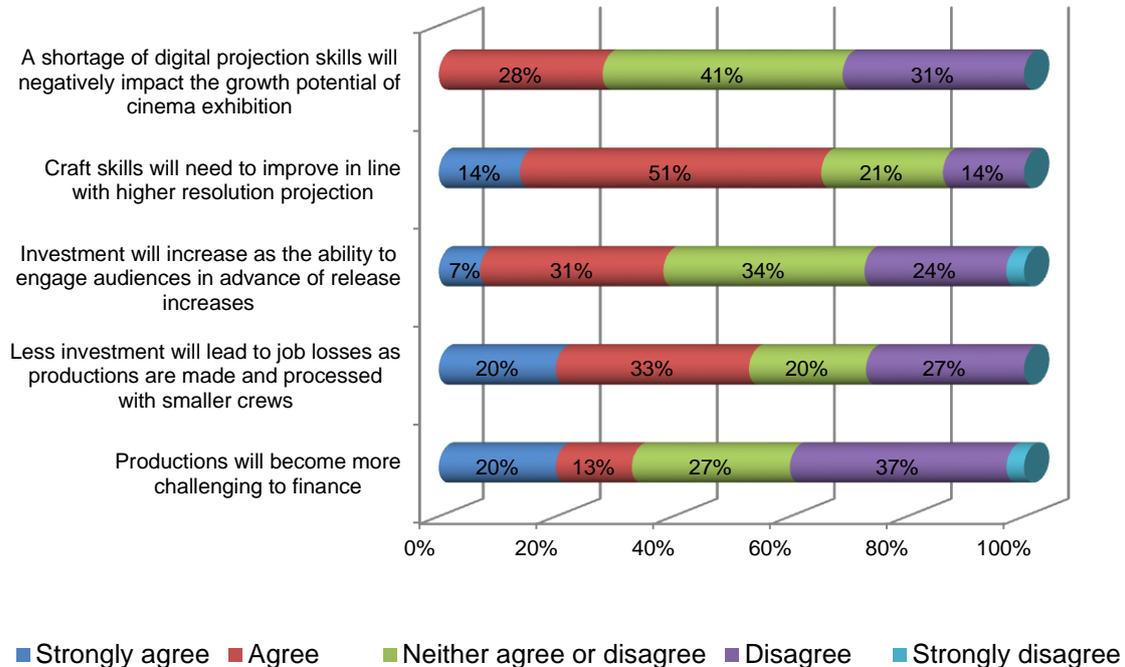


Panel: October 2013 Responses: 29

3g. Creative Skillset is currently developing an interactive future forecasting tool. Which of the following forecast indicators would be most useful to your company?

Panel: October 2013 Responses: 29

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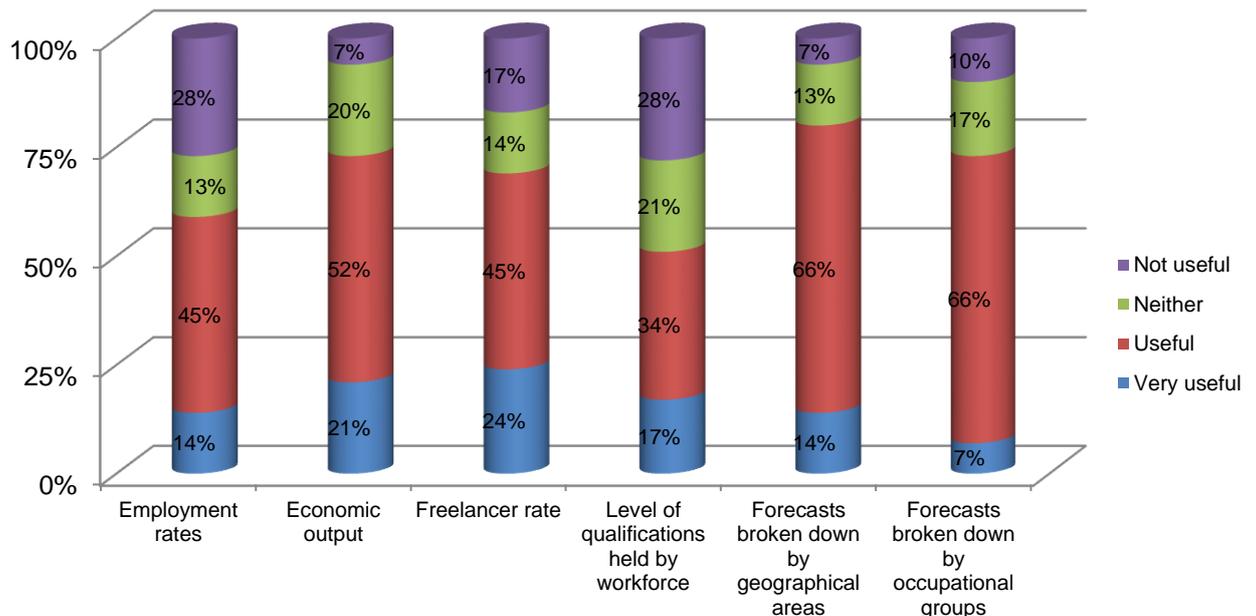
4. Training
4a. Would your company be interested in taking on part-funded graduate/postgraduate level trainees (up to 70% part-funding)?
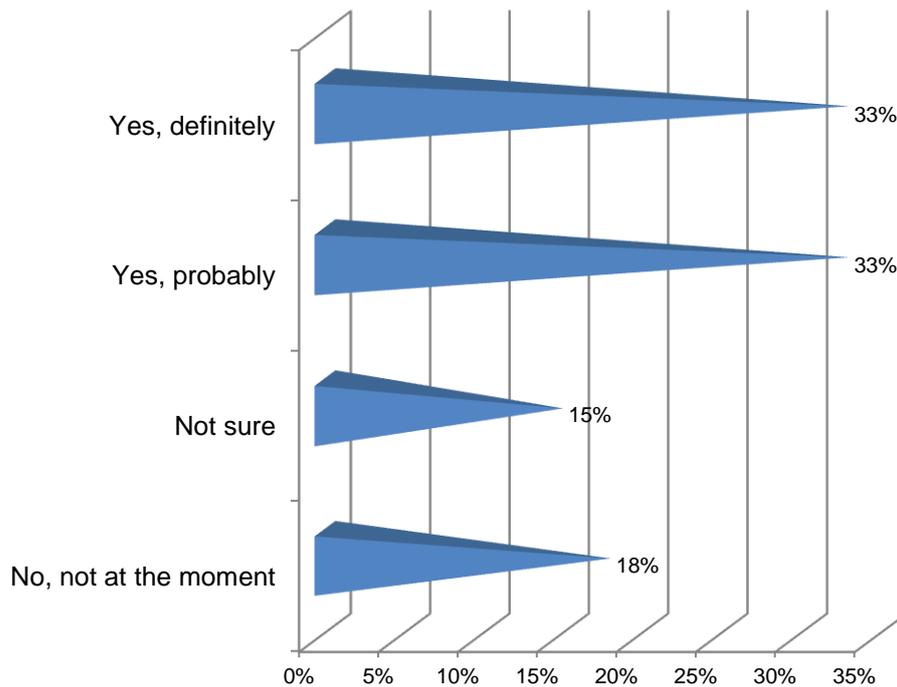

Panel: June 2013 Responses: 33

Of those respondents that indicated that they would be interested in taking on trainees, 59% stated that they would consider taking on one trainee, whilst 41% would consider employing 2-5 employees. 32% would consider taking on a trainee for 2-3 months, 32% would consider employing them for 4-6 months, whilst a further 32% would consider a 6-12 month period. 4% indicated that they would consider taking on a trainee(s) for one month.

4b. Does your company have a plan that specifies the level and type of training that the company will invest in over the coming year?
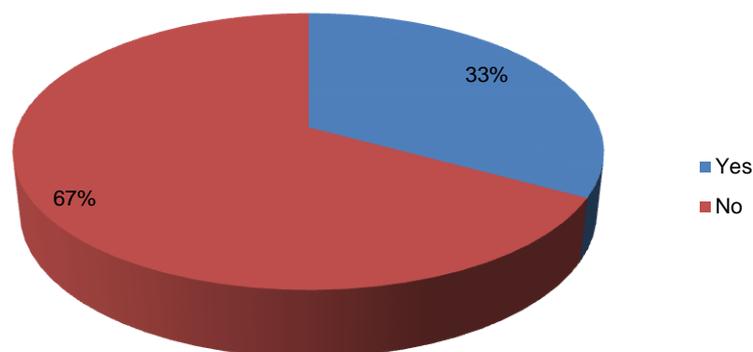
Panel: February 2014 Responses: 42

4c. Would your company be potentially interested in strategic training partnerships with other businesses i.e. sharing training schemes/resources with other companies in your industry?
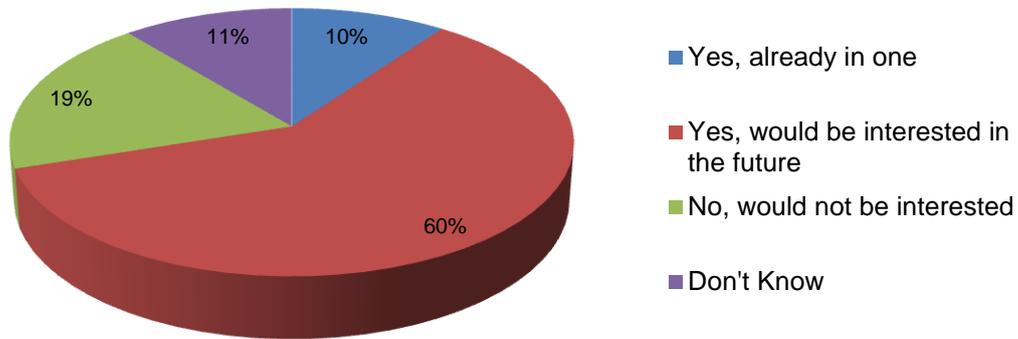

Panel: February 2014 Responses: 42

Respondents cited cost, time and small business size as reasons for not being interested in strategic training partnerships with other businesses. For full responses see Appendix A.

5. Apprenticeships

5a. Have you taken on, or would you consider taking on, apprentices in your company?
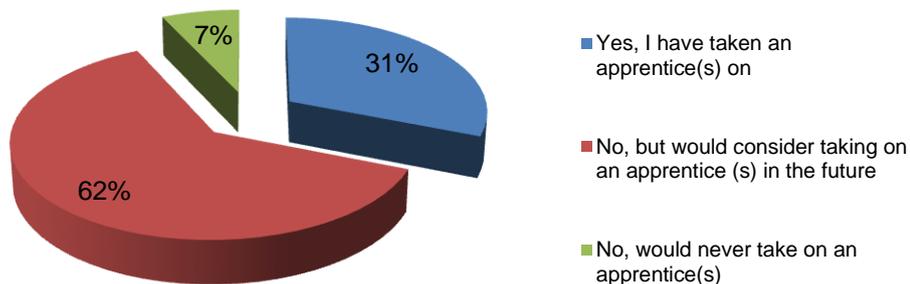
Panel: October 2013 Responses: 29

5b. If no, what are the main reasons your company has not taken on apprentices?
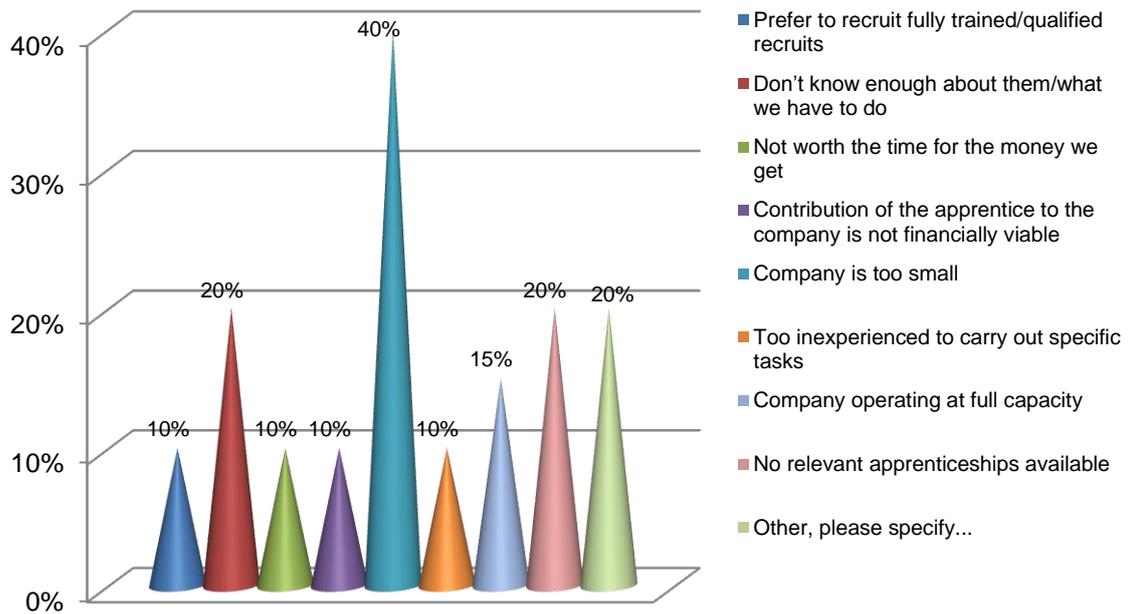

Panel: October 2013 Responses: 20

For a list of other reasons cited by respondents see appendix A.

Work-based Degree Programmes
To address employers' concerns that graduates often lack the appropriate experience and skills for the workplace, Creative Skillset is bringing together employers and universities to develop new higher level apprenticeship programmes with embedded honours degrees, aimed at highly motivated individuals.

Companies would recruit higher level apprentices on two year contracts on the apprentice minimum wage, and would help to determine the skills and knowledge that they need to develop, which would be delivered in short blocks by partner universities. We anticipate that this combination of work experience and university learning would result in highly skilled, employable graduates.

5c. In principle, do you support the idea of the new work-based higher level apprenticeships?
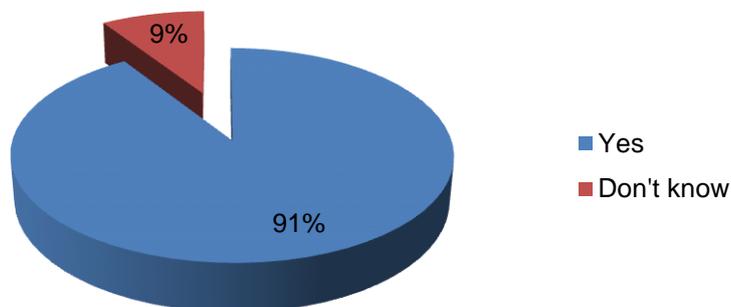

Panel: June 2013 Responses: 33

58% of respondents felt that these new programmes and their associated graduates with more industry relevant skills would probably have a potentially positive impact on the productivity of their company. 18% of respondents were certain that they would, whilst 3% did not think that they would at the moment. 21% were not sure.

When asked if their company would be prepared to recruit a higher level apprentice as part of their team for two years, 36% answered no, not at the moment. 33% were not sure, whilst 30% answered yes, probably. 50% stated that their company would probably be willing to pay this apprentice the minimum wage (currently £2.68 in year one and £5.03 for year two), 3% would definitely pay minimum wage, whilst 20% were unsure.

For additional comments on the new work-based degree programmes see Appendix A.

6. Networking
6a. If you had access to an online community platform for the Creative industries, would you be likely to..
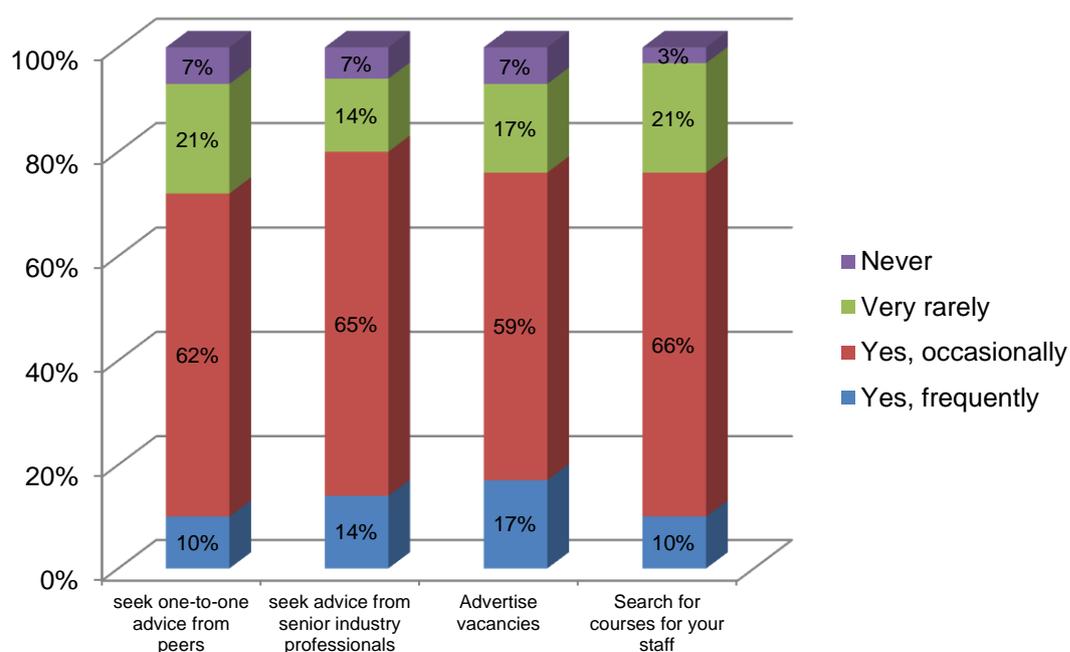
Panel: October 2013 Responses: 29

For a full list of other uses identified by respondents see Appendix A.

6b. If you had access to an online community platform, what is the one question you would ask fellow members?

Respondents stated a variety of questions including ones related to funding, recruitment and audience development strategy. For a full list of responses see Appendix A.

7. Diversity

7a. Does your company currently have a Diversity/Equality/Inclusion/Equal Opportunities Policy?
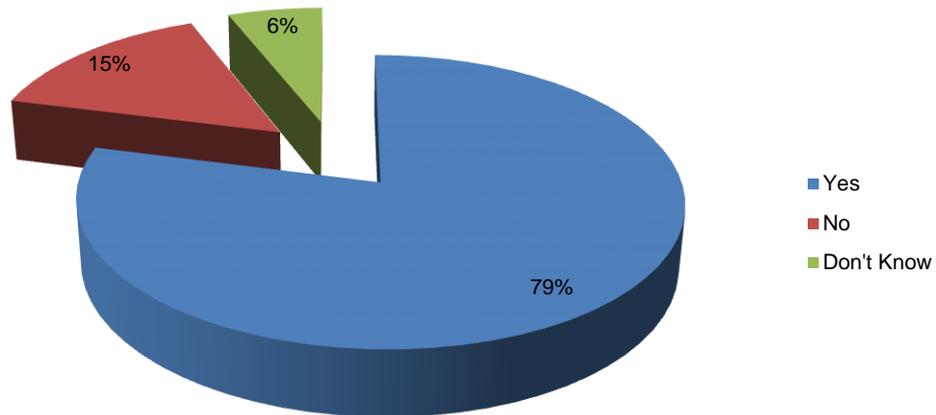
Panel: February 2014 Responses: 33

7b. How important is having a diverse workforce (that reflects the UK working population) to your company?
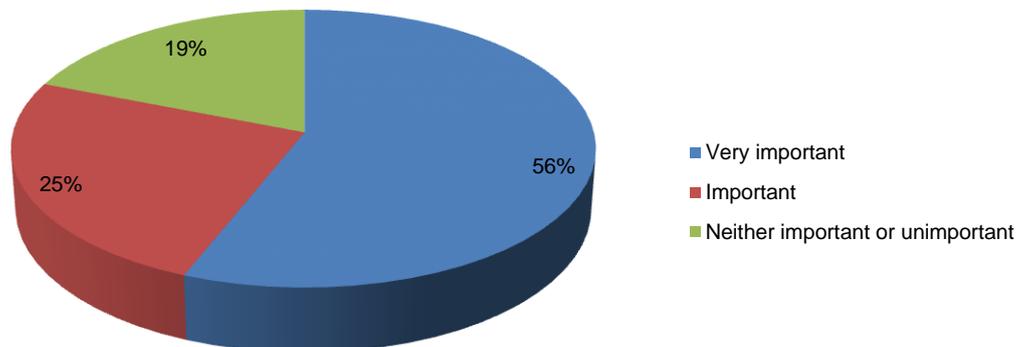
Panel: February 2014 Responses: 32

7c. Does your company monitor the levels of employment within your workforce of the following groups?
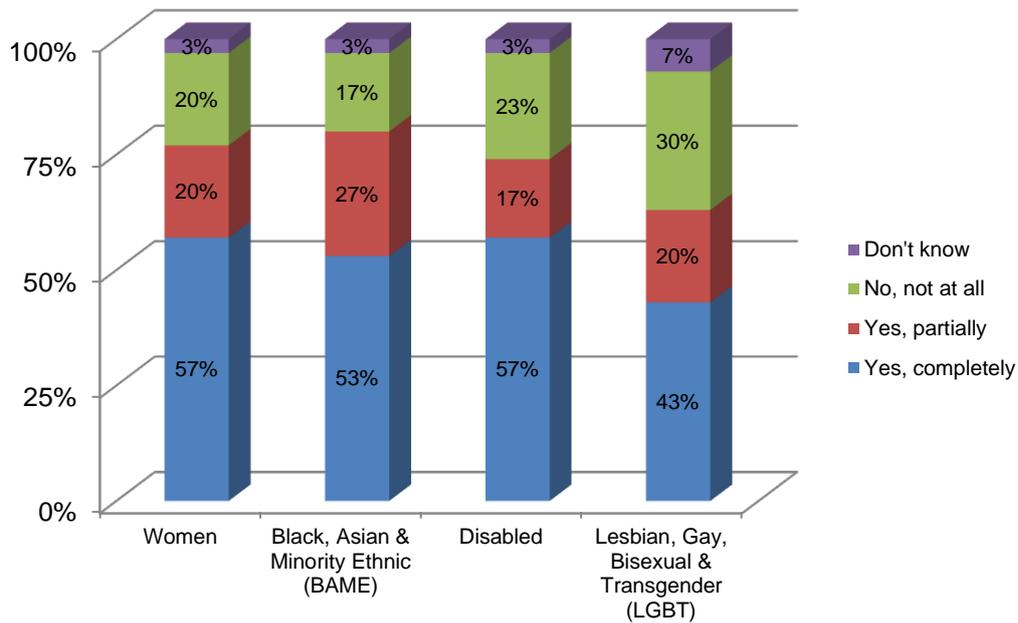
Panel: February 2014 Responses: 30

7d. Is the CEO or equivalent position within your company filled by:
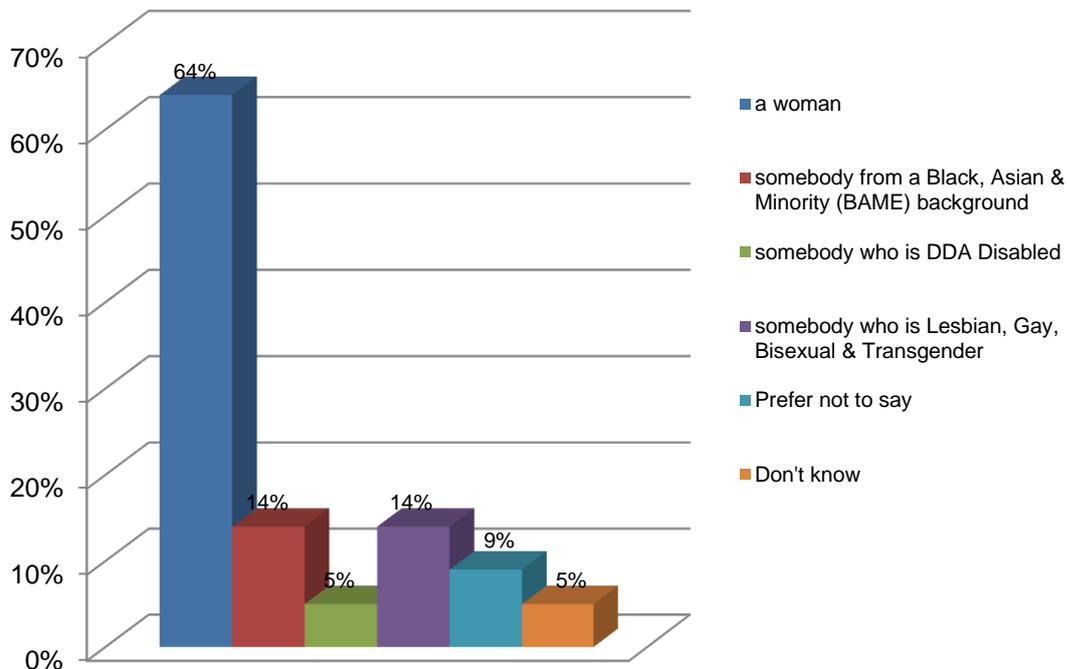
Panel: February 2014 Responses: 22

When asked if their company would find more information or support with diversity, equality or inclusion useful, 64% answered no, 26% stated yes and 10% did not know.

8. Creative Skillset Services
8a. Which of the following Creative Skillset services are you familiar with?
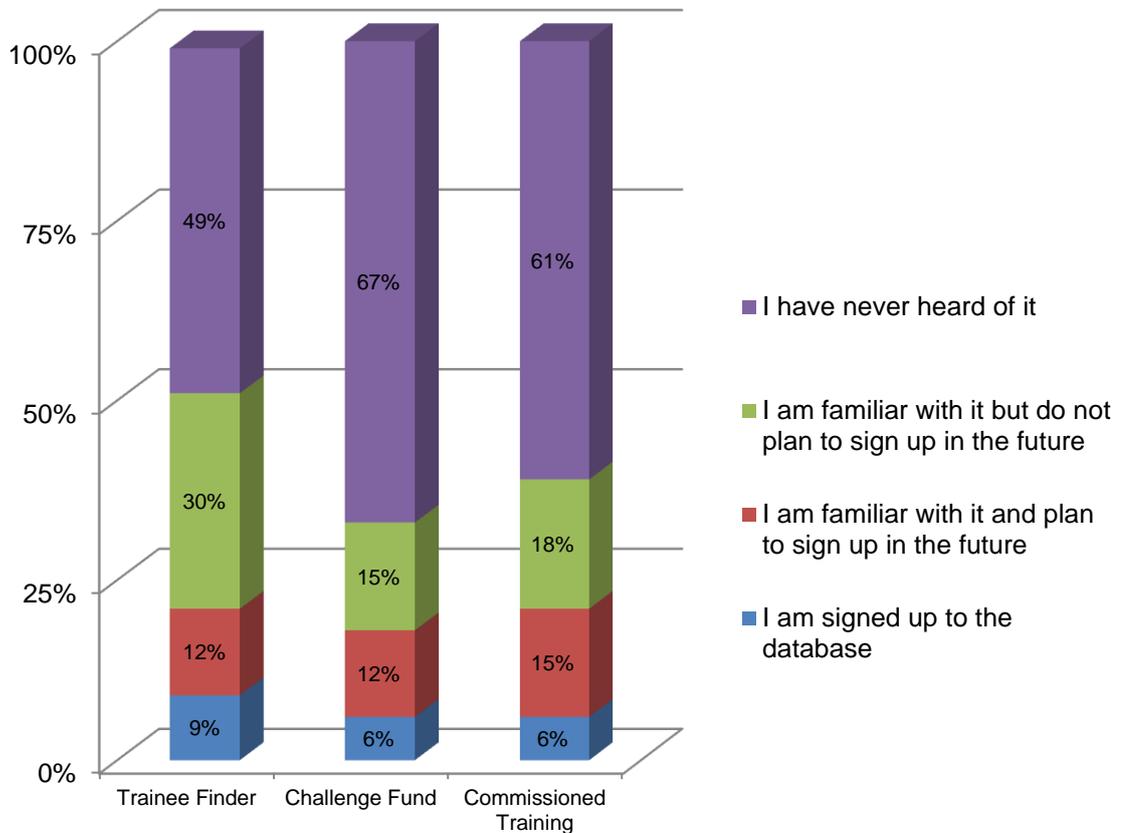
Panel: February 2014 Responses: 33

8b. Why do you not plan to sign up to Trainee Finder/Challenge Fund/Commissioned Training?

Respondents cited a lack of requirement and the cost as reasons for not planning to sign up to Trainee Finder. Concerns over company size were cited as reasons for not signing up to the challenge fund and/or Commissioned Training. For full results see Appendix A.

7c. How familiar are you with the Creative Skillset Tick?

Pie chart legend:
- 9% — I am familiar with the Tick and have used it directly in my work
- 24% — I am familiar with the Tick but have not used it directly in my work
- 24% — I have heard of the Tick but didn't know exactly what it was
- 42% — I have never heard of the tick
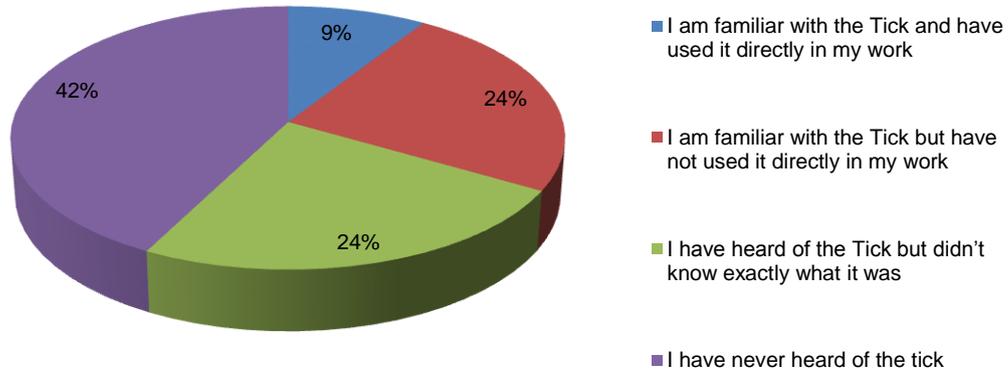
Panel: February 2014 Responses: 33

The three respondents who indicated that they had used the Tick directly in their work had worked with courses that have the Creative Skillset Tick. Two had worked as industry representatives in the accreditation process, Two had noted that graduates/apprentices they hire have come from accredited Creative Skillset courses. One respondent had used the tick to determine which degree courses are the most industry relevant and therefore worth their while working with/hiring from. One had attended Creative skillset events.

Appendix A: Open ended response to the Employer Panel Survey

3a. Does your company/production currently have any vacancies that are proving hard to fill? June 2013

Production Accountants
Experienced Computer Graphic artists
Administration/Marketing
Marketing, PR, Promotion and Social Media
Legal
Assistant Accountants
Experienced Computer Animators
Post production
Administration and Monitoring
Production Co-ordinators
Experienced Animation Directors
Assistant Co-ordinators
Experienced Sales person in Animation market
Production Managers

3c. 'Other' skills gaps within current workforce.

"Script Development."

"3D modelling."

"Business skills including financing know-how, financial planning and business modelling for film and TV."

"As a freelance script supervisor I am not that aware of what the individual productions companies are doing although I am sure that all of the larger studio pictures are fully versed in 3D."

"Changes in financing, crowd-funding, social media & film."

"Production accountants."

"Business development."

3d. In your experience, which entry routes into the industry have led to individuals being best prepared for their work?

"Bear in mind that this "entry" process is not linear; a significant route into the film industry is from other media (TV, theatre, radio, video games, commercials and corporates - and equally there is flow in the other direction."
"On the job learning combined with training. I don't know about formal apprenticeships and how they work in a freelance industry."

"I've found over the last ten years that skill levels of entry-level people has reduced considerably - not what they know, so much as their ability and preparedness to learn."

3e. What skills do you think film schools should be teaching over the next five years?

"To support new entrants in learning how to work; how to behave appropriately in the workplace, adapting their communication skills to effectively work with different levels of the chain of command... to know the critical importance of being reliable within the team."

"The core skills of film-making remain the same and appear well-taught in the UK; however, the inroads of digital camera technology into low-budget film-making may be eroding students' abilities to plan and shoot economically - it can be argued that the temptation (and ability) to go for many takes is actually counter-productive to the creative process. Also; as visual effects (VFX) become more broadly embedded in the workflow of production, it seems important to ensure that film schools keep students up to speed with new, effective technology that can positively impact their work, like set-replacement and pre-viz."

"Approaches to creative filmmaking that can be applied flexibly to a variety of productions."

"Industry awareness."

"Digital technologies."

"Working practices."

"Market Access and Market Intelligence."

"Producing."

"Budgeting."

"That not everyone can start as a top director."

"It depends on which jobs students are looking to get into but producer courses should contain more information on the real economics of the industry and the importance of producing films for an audience."

"The ability to listen and to spell!"

"They are doing a good job but also need to include more business awareness so that filmmakers have a greater understanding of the marketplace."

"The main feedback we get is that students are not work ready - they may have the technical skills but don't have the knowledge of the industry or how to behave on set etc. Stronger links with industry are essential."

"Being ready for the workplace and the demands of the industry - making the tea is not below you just because you have a degree. Also - MAKE SURE YOU CAN DRIVE!!!!!!"

"Studio/Film-making economics; Consumer content consumption habits; methods of advertising to consumers."

"Digital distribution and associated subjects."

"An appreciation of world cinema for a better understanding of what international co-productions will entail........that being the perceived primary growth area within Europe and beyond."

"Soft as well as hard. Coding as standard. Storytelling is more important to understand than technology."

"Practical skills with equipment usage and an understanding of the principles of the photographic image."

"Financing, sales, marketing, distribution."

"Greater emphasis on business and entrepreneurial skills."

"More on audience development, distribution, exhibition and digital distribution strategies. With saturation on cinema screens there needs to be an alternative to the traditional theatrical cinema desire to release films."

"Core Business Skills, Social Media, Marketing."

"Construction, FX, Ageing down & general paint FX, prosthetics, accountancy, directors, producers, DPS, VFX, post production sound."

4c. what are the main concerns that would prevent your partaking in a training partnership of this nature?

"We are a prohibitively small company."

"We're a 2 man operation and that works for us."

"Company is very small and does not employ any one at the moment."

"Bureaucracy."

"Dedicating the time from a small and overstretched team."

"Time."

5b. If no, what are the main reasons your company has not taken on apprentices?

"How does it work for freelancers and employers?"

"I run a small production and training company. We take on mentees and interns."

"Lack of time to source a good quality apprentice"

"Shooting abroad"

5c. Additional comments on the work-based degree programmes

"We're one of those tiny companies that has no full-time staff. We do hire freelancers, but mostly short-term, and we can't commit to any employment not directly related to a production."

"Excellent idea but I've just taken on a new developing producer and my company is too small to accommodate a second person."

"Before committing to anything fully it would be important to understand the requirements of the work-based degree programmes to ensure that they work with production and can be a positive thing for all concerned."

"The length of the two-year commitment would be the most difficult issue for us, as we are still an expanding business and do not tend to make staffing plans on such a long time-frame."

"In terms of taking on higher level apprentices for a 2 year period it would need to be in line with a position being available to fill at the company. I would be open to recruiting apprentices for new positions if their desire was to work in the industry."

"Though this sounds like a very good scheme, it is not appropriate to our company."

"2 years for the programme is potentially too long - we would look at 12 months as a maximum for an apprenticeship."

"Our current organisation business model will not be able to sustain extra staffing costs for at least the next 2 financial years. It is difficult to sustain our existing staffing level which is already skeleton. Finding a budget to contribute to these kinds of schemes would be extremely difficult for us."

"The key will be ensuring the blocks are relevant, timed to meet need, and work in the context of the company's programme of work."

"Work based degree an apprenticeships are invaluable stepping stones on the way to a career, but continuity of employment within an oversubscribed sector is the major challenge for young and emerging technicians and filmmakers. Self-sufficiency and multi-skilling absolutely vital in order to secure a future in our sector!"

"We are a small fairly new company which has been set up to work with consultants on specific projects as and when there is a need to extend capacity. In the current economic climate it would be difficult for us to commit to taking on a high level apprentice, however from previous experience in other companies we do believe that they offer both the company and their industry both short and long term benefits."

"It has always been difficult to find skilled artists in the Animation industry. Most of the really good ones move to London or the US."

"Work-based degree programs help validate the increasingly high-level skills necessary in the 21st century media industries. However, for directors we are very aware that practical skills must also be qualified by intellectual rigour. Though not directly involved with production, we operate as a vital training body and a charity in a cross-media capacity. The Directors Guild is a fascinating place to work for graduate industry-entrants. However, we are not in a position to offer long-term (2 year) positions."

"I'd like to have input on what they learn and the modules that are delivered on the framework for new posts under apprenticeships."

"I think it's a great idea in principle but is only relevant to entry level positions, of which we only have a couple of per year."

6a. If you had access to an online community platform for the Creative industries, would you be likely to..

"Advertise training in a more targeted way."

"Would hope to be able to use it to achieve smarter, more joined up thinking - better awareness of what others are doing in order to spot mutually beneficial opportunities and avoid duplication within area of training and development provision."

6b. If you had access to an online community platform, what is the one question you would ask fellow members?

"How will the information exchange be quality controlled and not turn into a free for all with so much information it becomes vacuous...."

"What advice, training and support would you like us to provide?"

"How are they managing to fund their projects?"

"Do you know skilled young talent with knowledge of business and market skills?"

"Is there one organisation that actually means what it says, and does what it says?"

"To give as much information about their projects both completed and planned as possible."

"BAFTA would be likely to ask for questions on behalf of the career starters it targets through its Learning and Events programme."

"Come from a training/ learning pov so it would be about learning needs."

"Who has any money?"

"It would be more to advertise vacancies."

"How to support the development in micro payment software for creative output."

"It would not be one question but specific questions dependent on what I was focusing on at the time. I would use it as a community support and problem solving solution."

"The whole point is that it would enable focused, specific and varied interaction and engagement."

"What have been your most successful audience development strategies?"

"Recommend experienced trainees."

8b. Why do you not plan to sign up to Trainee Finder/Challenge Fund/Commissioned Training?

Trainee Finder
I have referred young trainees to you but because I run a micro-business am unable to pay trainees
No actual requirement within the company
As far as I understand it, it doesn't apply to distribution.

Depends on the production
Not relevant to our organisation.
We always work with disabled trainees

Challenge Fund
Because my company and my turnover is too small

Commissioned Training
No actual requirement within the company

Appendix B: Any additional comments relating to the issues raised in this questionnaire or skills in the Creative Industries more generally.

October 2013
"From a systems analyst's perspective, I'd like to note that there is a tendency to think of the film industry (or any ""industry"") as a uniform, connected structure, whereas in fact it is an on-going and amorphous set of projects and individuals in a state of flux - and sometimes in direct competition for resources. This means that in many cases skills training may be impossible to direct within ""the industry"" with any coherence (unless production companies can be persuaded to budget training into actual productions).There has also been a tendency in higher education over the last twenty years to encourage training in popular film and other media-related courses with little or no consideration for the impact of growing numbers of new entrants into a small and over-crowded profession - which further adds to the fragmentation of ""the industry"". The traditional attitude has been that ""talent will reveal itself"" and the less-committed will drift out of the profession; however, the economic recession has made both paths harder. There is a clear need for good CPD (continuous professional development) across the industry; the Directors Guild of Great Britain (DGGB) supplies this with courses tailored to more experienced, working directors. However, there is also an on-going need to actively help younger directors make the jump from low-budget to feature film; there is no shortage of large-scale features being made on these shores at the moment; something like the DGA's Assistant Director Scheme or the DGGB's short lived Direct Access mentoring scheme is very-much needed."

"There's an abundance of craft skills training. What's missing is training in skills about how to get money and know how to present ideas to the market and live independently as a successful media creator. This is really crucial - there's a lack of world-class producers being produced in the UK and it's because film courses are just not teaching it. I'd also reiterate that on-the-job training and on-going training whilst developing a career produces better and more realistic outcomes than the outcomes from a film school or higher education course which often create unrealistic expectations."

"Apprenticeships are not an alternative to further education but should be developed in tandem with."

"I have lots of experience in both the delivery of training & development activities, and the use of online platforms as a way to engage beneficiaries/participants and build networks.

Lots of ideas and enthusiasm within this area, so would be happy to contribute further input and feedback!"

February 2014
"I run a not-for-profit media production and training company in Bedfordshire. We have close links with Bedfordshire Uni. As part of our training we run graduate mentoring and internship projects that are funded by the Uni. We also link with Apprenticeship trainee schemes in the county and refer younger people in search of apprenticeships to others including Skillset."

"As a freelance script supervisor starting out 15 years ago I definitely benefited from a Skill set training course. I work with various and diverse production companies and am employed by different directors and line producers on each film. I am never that aware of an active focus on equal employment and fear film still favours those best equipped to do the job regardless of ethnicity. I know the UK film industry is on the cutting edge of technology and advances in the latest make up prosthetics and 3D techniques and production design and we only have to cite 'Gravity' to offer an example of latest and innovatory ways post production has been used as well as in camera SFX and the use of special rigs. The industry could definitely use more on set training and mentoring and is most definitely not a racially integrated industry. If Skill set could help improve this aspect of the industry it would be important and relevant to the 21st century."

"The treatment of skills at the recent BVE shows us what is wrong: '4k', 'Cinematography' and 'Production' get big dedicated and strategically placed, visible 'theatres' with their own sound mixer, whilst 'Skills' gets a tucked away corner without seating opportunities that is hard to find."

"We are committed to making a tectonic difference in the representation of disabled film talent in the UK. 13 % of the UK population are disabled but only 1% of the film industry."

"I think a cohesive approach toward diversity would be much appreciated. For example diversity is often identified separately as gender, race etc."