

The Entrepreneurial Educator in Creative Industries Education

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Abstract

This paper explores the skills, knowledge, behaviour and values that teachers require within creative industries education, across arts disciplines. It argues for the adoption of a model of 'the entrepreneurial educator' to facilitate students' development of entrepreneurial learning and entrepreneurship in the creative industries, which are characterised by high levels of self-employment and freelancing.

Key Themes and Relevance to Teaching and Learning

Entrepreneurial Teaching, Entrepreneurial Learning, Entrepreneurship, Creative Industries Education, Professional Development

Introduction

Current UK policies emphasise the value of, and need for, entrepreneurship to be taught within the higher education curriculum (Dearing 1997, Cox 2005, DCMS 2006). Policy tends to focus on the occupational skills students will need to situate themselves successfully within creative industries. Policy makers will also need to consider how to develop the roles of educators who deliver, and necessarily innovate, the curriculum in this context. This paper is not concerned with the teacher as entrepreneur in the traditional business sense, but how educational culture and entrepreneurial learning can be affected through the entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, behaviour and values of teachers.

This paper describes the learning and teaching context of Artsworld, the Centre of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) in the creative industries at Bath Spa University, through exploring the factors that will enable teachers to become entrepreneurial educators. I suggest that Artsworld creates an entrepreneurial learning environment, across the arts disciplines, which enables and requires its Senior Teaching Fellows to adopt entrepreneurial approaches and practices within their teaching.

My working definition of the entrepreneurial educator is a teacher who develops the skills, knowledge, behaviour and values to initiate and exploit opportunities in the educational, occupational, social and global environments. S/he situates entrepreneurial learning within these multiple communities, practices and processes, through creative and innovative teaching and learning.

Creative Industries Education

'Creative industry education' is a contemporary development in arts education and is indicative of responses by higher education to international forces of politics, economics, technology and socio-culture (see Jeffcut and Pratt 2002). The relationship between creativity, learning and economics creates some ideological conflict between higher education and industry, most recently through the promotion of the employability agenda. Current interest in entrepreneurship education has evolved through overlapping debates about employability and creativity with the curriculum.

Entrepreneurship as the "*initiation of change* through creativity and innovation" (Morrison and Johnston 2003) describes the set of skills, knowledge, behaviour and values which inform the actions of entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs may be recognised through the transformation of process and products, which innovate the delivery to, or exploitation of, audiences or market places. Innovation as an everyday practice creates entrepreneurial opportunity, which may stimulate entrepreneurial activity. Entrepreneurial educators, as catalysts of change (Schumpeter 1934), are situated in the learning environment as 'market place' and the educational process, the 'product' they develop.

Recent discussions about creativity have moved away from considering the slippery nature of creativity towards considering creative teaching (Oliver, 2002, McGoldrick 2002, Jackson and Shaw 2005). Discussions about entrepreneurship may also need to move in this direction – not just in terms of curriculum innovation or focus, but also in terms of the professional development of teaching staff. Brown 2005, Gibb 2005, Pittaway and Cope, 2006, amongst others, explore a pedagogy for developing entrepreneurial skills in students, which moves away from the traditional business model, and this paper expands on these by exploring a pedagogy 'of', not 'for',

entrepreneurship. As Morrison and Johnston (2003) state, pedagogic interventions could enhance the entrepreneurial potential, of both student and educator:

"Educational interventions can unlock the potential of entrepreneurship through a focus on the nurturing of innovation and creation, towards commercial application, through the heightening of personal qualities of reflecting, doing, valuing, feeling, behaving and relating to others. They would aim to sensitise potential entrepreneurs to the value of a disposition to personal creativity as related to entrepreneurship". Morrison and Johnston (2003 p.148)

Artsworld and Entrepreneurial Education

Artsworld has a mission to innovate arts education, to enhance the employability and self-employability of creative industries graduates and explore additional themes of creativity and technology. Artsworld explores new ways of learning and teaching, to enable students to enter their chosen profession with a portfolio of skills and completed projects that have been *shaped, developed and assessed in the context of the marketplace*. Entrepreneurial learning has emerged as central to the attainment of these goals. As part of its longitudinal research, Artsworld has developed a 'Learning in the Arts Student Questionnaire' (LASQ) to gather knowledge about the needs, expectations and aspirations of creative industry students across three schools; Music and Performing Arts, English and Creative Studies and the Bath School of Art and Design. Data analysis, from the responses of 557 first year students on course entry (55% of the total cohort), showed that 61% identified the most appealing working environments as running their own business and 87% working freelance as a creative practitioner. Early LASQ data from third year students on exit, indicates similar findings. This suggests a high demand from creative industry students for educational contexts which support and encourage entrepreneurial tendency (see also ADM-HEA 2007). Entrepreneurial learning may need to be explicit within creative industries education from year one.

Artsworld created six learning labs: MUSICLAB, BROADCASTLAB, PUBLISHINGLAB, PERFORMANCELAB, DESIGNLAB and FASHIONLAB. These are discipline focused, bespoke learning spaces, enabling teaching, support staff and students to experiment and take risks in a safe and supported environment. In recognition of their teaching excellence and subject knowledge, a Senior Teaching Fellow (STF) was appointed to lead each Lab. Artsworld provides time, space and autonomy (factors which support the creative process) for the STFs to explore their pedagogic practices and for curriculum innovation and development within and across the disciplines. More importantly, it also affords the STFs institutional licence to take risk. This creates three key components related to entrepreneurial education: an autonomous educator, an environment for promoting entrepreneurial learning and teaching and, thirdly, the institution placing high value on entrepreneurial behaviour. From an educational researcher and developer's perspective, it is evident that the STFs are developing the entrepreneurial skills and values that they aim to develop in their students, so that "what is learnt is profoundly connected to the conditions in which it is taught" (Brown and Duguid, 1991).

Experimentation and risk taking are often discussed as key attributes of the creative process. However, the entrepreneurial educator is responsible for specific outcomes that have a tangible (market) value within and across industry and education. Thus, the STFs exploit new technology and explore create collaborations across disciplines and with industry, in order to develop new projects and processes. This approach reflects that: "entrepreneurs are action-orientated and much of their learning occurs through experience and discovery (in Pittaway and Cope 2006). The relationship between discovery and scholarship is central to educational and professional development and: "inquiry, investigation, and discovery are the heart of the enterprise" (Boyer Commission 1998).

Entrepreneurship as discovering and assessing opportunities, business planning, gathering resources, managing the growing enterprise and harvesting value (Mullins 2006), describes the role of the STF within Artsworld. They have become teacher-managers; leading small teams of staff, operationalising Lab development plans in a highly individualised way, and interpreting and responding to educational and industry market needs. As a teacher-practitioner, the STF acts as a creative interface, bridging education and the world of creative industry. As an entrepreneurial educator, the STF develops a community of practice across education, industry and organisational boundaries. This community creates and exploits opportunities, for *learning capital* and 'know who' for student learning through the STF capitalising on their own skills and knowledge, and that of other professionals, to create *educational 'venture'*. This aligns with contemporary theorising which 'has emphasised the need to understand entrepreneurial learning [teaching] as social practice where entrepreneurs are viewed as practitioners who operate within multiple, overlapping social communities of knowledge and practice" (in

Pittaway and Cope 2006). Activity within this context is not self-motivated, but to exploit networks and collaborations in order to innovate, not just within the curriculum, but to situate the curriculum and student learning within an entrepreneurial context. An entrepreneurial educator enables participation in a social process in which the teacher and learner are jointly operating within an authentic community of entrepreneurial practice.

In terms of learning entrepreneurship, it may be agreed that students need to be situated in entrepreneurial contexts; usually through industry-based simulated projects and tasks. Artwork teaching staff work with students on live or real projects so that the entrepreneurial educator teaches primarily on a "how to" and 'need to know' basis, dominated by processes of 'doing', solving problems, grasping opportunities, copying from others, mistake making and experiment" (Gibb, 2005). The entrepreneurial educator however, must have a comprehensive knowledge of course design and how students learn. So, in this respect course design is the change catalyst for the entrepreneurial learning culture.

In Gibb's list of "entrepreneurial values" (2005), those particularly relevant to the STF include a strong sense of independence, a strong sense of ownership (in relation to their Lab and their discipline based curricula), a belief in being able to make things happen, strong action orientation, and a strong belief in the value of 'know-who' and trust. Gibb also lists entrepreneurial characteristics. STF exhibit aptitudes towards networking, exploiting opportunities, harnessing, marketing, resource identification, creation and development and value focus. Risk-taking, experimentation and the ability to manage change are crucial. Creative problem-solving, independent decision-making, flexibility and confident presentation are key entrepreneurial characteristics, as is the ability to persuade and influence others. STF are also developing the ability to work across disciplines, acquiring multiple knowledge through the exploitation of opportunities across subject and occupational boundaries; a trans-disciplinary and professional agility afforded through, for example, the use of technology.

Conclusion

This paper has explored how Artwork and particularly its Senior Teaching Fellows, are working within the current policy landscape of entrepreneurship education for the creative industries. Our experience shows that delivering such policy goals within higher education may have broad implications for the evolving debate in that the entrepreneurial approach and practice of teachers should be considered as a condition for the development of entrepreneurial learning of students.

The model of the entrepreneurial educator, enabled to act through discovery (risk) and, discover through action (experimentation), has implications for the professional development of teachers. Entrepreneurial educators create or encounter conditions of ambiguity and take on unfamiliar tasks; factors that may lead to high-pressure teaching and learning environments. Entrepreneurial teaching and learning is a process that needs the support of higher education infrastructure. An entrepreneurial environment, developed through teachers' transformational actions and initiative taking, creates high-value learning opportunities. Both teachers and students will need to look beyond traditional expectations of the higher education context and locate themselves in a broader social and economic context, relating trans-disciplinary knowledge to trans-occupational skills.

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