



## **Art, Craft and Design in the Curriculum - Passion or Product?**

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### **Abstract**

The paper will examine the developing philosophical and pedagogical tensions within art, craft and design provision in English secondary schools. It will be considered as to whether art, craft and design's success in promoting inclusion and equality of opportunity, has, in fact, undermined its claim to academic and intellectual rigor. Has this led to the re-emergence of a 'reductionist' ideology that views art, craft and design as a 'soft' subject that fulfils a vocational role outside an 'academic' curriculum?

A resulting dichotomy has emerged between the philosophical aspirations of a progressive and divergent vision for arts education and the practices adopted within schools; a more objective functionality of 'making', skill and technique as oppose to investigating the more 'problematic' and subjective issues associated with imagination, expression and the construction of meaning?

The advent of the E-Bacc in the UK is having a significant effect on art, craft and design provision in schools. The dichotomy between education policies that are seen not to value the arts within a new 'academic' curriculum framework (Secondary Curriculum Review) is, seemingly, at odds with a developing focus on the 'creative industries' as a driver for economic growth. This raises significant questions for teachers, artists and societies as a whole:

- As educators, how are we to address these growing divides?
- Is passion enough to justify and defend art, craft and design's role in the curriculum?
- How do we overcome society's increasing idealization of product, as a justification of itself?
- Will the focus on 'employability' change the role of art, craft and design?