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3rd Report of Session 2016–17

Skills for theatre: Developing the pipeline of talent

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Select Committee on Communications

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Evidence is published online at www.parliament.uk/skills-theatre-industry and available for inspection at the Parliamentary Archives (020 7219 3074).

Q in footnotes refers to a question in oral evidence.

SUMMARY

The Committee was very grateful to the range of people and organisations who shared with us their knowledge and understanding of the UK theatre industry.

However, we were unable to complete our inquiry in advance of the dissolution of Parliament before the unexpected General Election. In the absence of sufficient time to analyse the evidence and develop conclusions and recommendations, this report seeks to summarise the evidence we have heard. We believe it highlights issues that merit further consideration.

Issues raised in evidence

Although the theatre industry is rightly hailed as one of the UK's cultural and economic success stories, we heard that there are concerns now that could lead to serious problems in the future if they are not addressed. Many witnesses identified hazards that have led to a "leaking pipeline of talent".¹

In summary, our witnesses identified five key concerns:

- (1) In relation to education policy, some witnesses felt that changes, specifically the introduction of the EBacc with its emphasis on STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), has had a detrimental effect on the status of arts subjects in state schools. The Government denied this but agreed that a well-rounded education was essential. For most young people, and a disproportionate number of those from less affluent households, theatre is first encountered at school. The disparity between the access to art subjects between children in state schools and those in fee-paying schools was a primary concern for our witnesses, who felt the resulting pipeline of talent would become ever-more dependent on the affluence of parents.
- (2) We were told that changes are needed in careers advice relating to jobs in the theatre. The perception of a career in this sector is associated with insecure employment and "low pay or no pay". These assumptions, along with the introduction of fees for further and higher education, as well as the concentration of opportunities in London, dissuades parents, teachers and careers officers from recommending or even supporting young people from regional, less affluent, culturally diverse or less well connected backgrounds from pursuing careers in theatre.
- (3) On the theme of training, witnesses maintained that there is little understanding of the full gamut of jobs in the theatre sector, with inadequate training routes in some technical areas, including lighting, sound, design, wardrobe and carpentry, and in some administrative areas, including theatre and stage management, accountancy and fundraising. We heard doubts that the Government's apprenticeship schemes adequately catered for the creative sector, specifically theatre. There was a strong appetite for a better apprenticeship scheme designed by and for the creative industries. This was seen as one part of a need for a wider matrix of better training opportunities.

1 Written evidence Dr Dave O'Brien (STI0001)

- (4) A number of witnesses drew attention to the number of performers, directors and writers from more affluent backgrounds and the corresponding underrepresentation of those from Black, Asian and Middle Eastern (BAME) communities. However, the Committee heard evidence that the theatre sector itself, particularly the publicly funded sector is impressive in its outreach work and extremely committed to seeking diversity of representation (socio-economic, gender and BAME) on and off the stage. Nevertheless, this was challenged by a lack of resources and a principal responsibility to use their funds to put on productions. Because many productions and theatre makers are developed in the regions and fringe before coming to the commercial sector, some suggested that the commercial sector might take a greater responsibility for funding these early steps in the talent pipeline.
- (5) Central to the concerns of most of our witnesses was the question of funding, particularly the impact of cuts by local many local authorities. We heard a great deal about the ecosystem, in which regional theatres of all kinds and fringe theatres in London provide the opportunity for new talent both on and off stage. Regional theatres risk increasingly becoming ‘receiving houses’ rather than ‘producing houses’, a shift which threatens the next generation of theatre makers and further disadvantages those who live outside London. It also reduces the economic benefits of a theatre to its local area. The case was made that this trend will eventually have a profound effect on what ends up in West End Theatres, on Broadway and on our TV and cinema screens.

We believe these five issues, drawn to our attention by the witnesses who came before us and spelt out in a number of written submissions, should be given careful scrutiny by government and all other interested parties. We hope that, despite the Committee’s work being cut short, this summary of evidence will prove helpful and contribute to maintaining the flow of talent which has served the UK’s theatre industry so very well.

Skills for theatre: Developing the pipeline of talent

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND

Why is the theatre industry important?

1. The theatre industry is a vibrant part of the cultural landscape of the UK. It contributes to the nation's well-being. As one witness told the Committee “the NHS looks after us physically but theatre looks after us spiritually.”² The theatre also adds value to the UK's related creative sectors, for example, film and television, and wider cultural life, and is one of the key profitable creative industries exported globally.
2. UK theatre is critically acclaimed across the world and showcases the country's creative talent overseas, working as an important element in the UK's soft power. In evidence to the House of Lords Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence, the British Council stated that “The UK's global influence draws on its reputation as a place of excellence, creativity, ingenuity, a world leader in finance, the Law, science, research, the arts and creative industries”.³ The arts provide an important conduit for the English language and boost the profile of the UK throughout the world.

Cultural economy

3. In a 2014 report, Arts Council England claimed that, for every £1 of salary paid by the arts and culture industry, an additional £2.01 is generated in the wider economy through the creation of jobs and supply of services needed to sustain it.⁴ In 2015 there were a total of 642,000 jobs in the UK cultural sector, an increase of 17.8 per cent from 2011. The estimated number of UK jobs in music, performing and the visual arts was 286,000, including both creative and support roles.⁵
4. The cultural and creative industries also help generate tourism revenue. For example, in 2011, 10 million visits to the UK involved engagement with the arts and culture, representing 32 per cent of all visits to the UK and 42 per cent of all tourism-related expenditure.⁶
5. The aggregate turnover of business in the UK arts and culture industry was £15.1 billion in 2013, according to the Centre for Economic and Business

2 Q 39 (Sue Emmas)

3 Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence, *Persuasion and Power in the Modern World* (Report of Session 2013–14, HL Paper 150), page 88

4 Arts Council England, *The Value of Arts and Culture to the People and Society* (March 2014) p 7: http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Value_arts_culture_evidence_review.pdf [accessed 24 April 2017]

5 Creative Industries Council, ‘UK to the World’: <http://www.thecreativeindustries.co.uk/industries/arts-culture/arts-culture-facts-and-figures/the-economic-contribution-of-the-arts> [accessed 24 April 2017]

6 Arts Council England, *The Value of Arts and Culture to the People and Society* (March 2014) p 7: http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Value_arts_culture_evidence_review.pdf [accessed 24 April 2017]

Research (CEBR).⁷ The CEBR also estimates that the arts and culture sector contributes £7.7 billion to the UK economy annually.

6. The Society of London Theatre's (SOLT)⁸ results for 2016 showed that in 2016 its member theatres generated a combined gross revenue of £644.7 million, up 1.7 per cent compared to 2015. Ticket sales just in London generated £107.5 million in VAT receipts.⁹ Table 1 contains a breakdown of the key figures.

Table 1: Attendance and revenue of London theatres in 2016

	Attendance	Change from 2015 (per cent)	Gross Box Office Revenue	Change from 2015 (per cent)
Musicals	8,132,673	-2	£400,812,904	4
Plays	4,181,318	4	£152,545,013	8
Other (Opera, Dance, Performance, Entertainment)	2,014,130	15	£91,361,722	-15
Total	14,328,121	-2.8	£644,719,639	1.7

Source: Society of London Theatre

7. The lower attendance figures in 2016 correspond to a fall in the number of performances. The percentage of seats filled was in fact up by 4.1 per cent at 76.7 per cent. The average price paid for a ticket was £45 (an increase of 4.68 per cent).
8. According to Julian Bird, the chief executive of both SOLT and UK Theatre,¹⁰ the turnover of ticket sales across the whole of the UK is about £1 billion a year, and “more people go to shows in our venues than go to all league football games in the UK”.¹¹

Structure of the industry

9. Our witnesses described the theatre industry as an ecosystem. It is made up of both small and large organisations with a mixed model of funding from public investment, earned income and charitable giving. There are many varied roles within it. It is important to emphasise that careers in theatre are not limited to performers: they also include prop design, costume design and making, carpentry, producers, theatre managers, fund-raising, accountancy, wig-making, directing, stage management, writing, set design, voice coaching, movement direction and choreography, lighting design, and marketing.

7 Centre for Economic and Business Research, *Contribution of the arts and culture industry to the national economy* (July 2015): http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Arts_culture_contribution_to_economy_report_July_2015.pdf [accessed 21 April 2017]

8 SOLT is a membership organisation and the statistics are based on London's 53 major commercial and publicly funded theatres.

9 SOLT, *Society of London Theatre reports box office figures for 2016*: <http://solt.co.uk/about-london-theatre/press-office/society-of-london-theatre-reports-box-office-figures-for-2016/> [accessed 21 April]

10 UK Theatre is a membership organisation for theatres across the UK.

11 [Q 1](#) (Julian Bird)

10. London theatre accounts for more than 60% of the whole of the UK box office revenues, and musicals account for the overwhelming majority of that. London is home to a number of highly successful commercial theatres, but many theatres receive the greater part of their income from publicly available funding, including from Arts Council England, which itself receives a large amount of funding from the National Lottery. Publicly funded theatres can be both small, such as Tricycle, and very large, such as the National Theatre. While regional theatres do not generate the same level of income as those in London, they also vary in size and the extent to which they are commercially self-reliant or dependent on grants.
11. We heard that regional and publicly funded theatres are also where the majority of theatre workers begin their careers. It is therefore not possible to isolate the commercial London theatre from the rest.

Wider creative industries

12. Theatre plays an important role in supporting the UK's wider commercial creative industries, such as film production, advertising, design and crafts. Julian Bird, chief executive of UK Theatre and Society of London Theatre (SOLT), told the Committee that the "theatre and performing arts is often the catalyst. It is the starting point for people's careers."¹² One witness told us that the TV and film industry feed off the theatre industry's "content, artists or technicians".¹³
13. There are many jobs which require skills that are transferable across the creative sector, from prop design and manufacture to writing and directing. In England theatre acts as a nursery for talent for related creative industries such as film and television. As Julian Bird told the Committee, "Hollywood is packed with British technical and creative skills, 90 per cent of which have come through regional theatre."¹⁴

Our inquiry

14. Because of theatre's critical role within the creative industries, we decided to undertake a short inquiry to consider how the UK can nurture and develop the talent needed to maintain its success. In particular, we set out to investigate what possible routes there are for young people into the industry and what barriers they face. We announced the launch of our report through our website,¹⁵ and received a limited number of written submissions. The bulk of our evidence came orally over the course of six sessions with industry experts and Matt Hancock MP, the Minister of State for Digital and Culture at DCMS. We also visited the Royal Court Theatre in Sloane Square, which has a reputation for producing new writing, where we met a number of people from a range of different roles within the theatre, including the general manager, artistic director, head of lighting, outreach workers, and John Tiffany, the winner of the 2017 Olivier Award for Best Director.¹⁶

12 [Q 11](#) (Julian Bird)

13 [Q 40](#) (Indhu Rubasingham)

14 [Q 7](#) (Julian Bird)

15 Communications Committee, 'Skills for the theatre industry: new inquiry launched' (10 March 2017): <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/lords-select/communications-committee/news-parliament-2015/theatre-inquiry-launch/> [accessed 27 April 2017]

16 See Appendix 4.

15. Despite a number of concerns raised by our witnesses, we felt that we had not received enough evidence, in advance of the unexpected announcement of a General Election and the dissolution, to develop conclusions and recommendations for the Government and others. This report therefore summarises the evidence that we have heard. We believe that it clearly highlights issues that merit further consideration. We do not expect a formal response from the Government, but we look forward to a debate.
16. Both culture and education are devolved matters. This report focuses on policy issues for England.

Acknowledgements

17. We are grateful to all those who submitted written submissions, attended oral evidence sessions, or met us at the Royal Court Theatre. We are also grateful to our Specialist Adviser, Professor Jen Harvie of Queen Mary University of London, for her expertise and advice throughout the course of this inquiry.

CHAPTER 2: SCHOOL EDUCATION

18. School is where most young people first encounter arts and culture. Indhu Rubasingham, Artistic Director of Tricycle Theatre, told the Committee of the importance of this exposure for the health of the industry:

“It will always be a competitive industry and there will always be people who want to work in the arts because it is an attractive industry. It is a passion and it attracts us all, but if we do not give those opportunities to every young person, regardless of background, we will kill the industry in the future, because without that diversity and those voices we will become an elitist and much more reduced industry.”¹⁷

Primary education

19. Sue Emmas, Associate Artistic Director at the Young Vic said:

“What is needed in education is for young people to get exposure to theatre and drama as early as possible, so in primary school and leading through into secondary school, and for it to be seen as a core subject. Sometimes in primary schools it is not given enough time and scope to be explored due to numeracy and literacy.”¹⁸

20. Alice King-Farlow, Director of Learning at the National Theatre, was concerned about provision for this age group:

“At primary [school], in the English curriculum, there is quite a clear mandate requirement for drama as an art form in the purpose of study. However, it is being squeezed out in a lot of schools by a narrow focus on attainment and the understandable anxiety about league tables.”¹⁹

Secondary Education

21. Witnesses stressed the importance of exposure to theatre in secondary schools. Christine Payne, the General Secretary of the actors’ union Equity, said that for her members, “arts subjects—drama, music—in schools are very important. They are very important from an early age, from key stage 1 right up to 4. Most of the encouragement for my members, for actors, to come into the profession is given at school.”²⁰
22. In 2010 the Government introduced the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) as a measure of school performance based on the performance of pupils at GCSE level in English, maths, history or geography, science and foreign languages.²¹ Some have argued that this has led to a shift in focus in the curriculum on to these subjects at the expense of the others.
23. This is in line with a wider perception that, as a result of the Government’s drive to prioritise the teaching of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), including through the adoption of the EBacc, teachers and parents have discouraged children from opting for creative arts subjects.

17 [Q 39](#) (Indhu Rubasingham)

18 [Q 39](#) (Sue Emmas)

19 [Q 21](#) (Alice King-Farlow)

20 [Q 5](#) (Christine Payne)

21 Unlike the International Baccalaureate, the EBacc is not in itself a qualification. House of Commons Library, English Baccalaureate, Briefing Paper [SN06045](#), 6 January 2017 [accessed 26 April 2017]

24. Sue Emmas told the Committee that:

“[The] EBacc is an area of discussion that may be creating a hierarchy of core subjects, with theatre and drama perhaps being seen as a soft option and not necessarily being encouraged by the governors in schools and therefore by the senior management team and the teachers who feed it into the parents who feed it down to the children.”²²

25. The Creative Industries Federation, an industry organisation, published a report that criticised the Government’s strategy on the grounds that its focus on ‘core subjects’ has encouraged a steep decline in students taking creative subjects between the academic years 2007–8 and 2014–5.²³ The report also pointed out that students with “a high level of deprivation” tend to take fewer subjects at GCSE, and so are more likely not to opt for subjects which are not included in the EBacc.
26. Matt Hancock MP, Minister for Digital and Culture, denied that the EBacc had affected the take-up of creative arts GCSEs: “The arts are in the curriculum up to age 14, and the number of GCSE entries has in fact risen over the past few years for 14 to 16 year-olds.”²⁴ Figures from the Department for Education show that this is not just true in terms of absolute numbers: the percentage of pupils taking arts subjects at GCSEs rose both in state-funded schools and all schools together.²⁵
27. The New Schools Network, a charity which aims to help the establishment of free schools, also conducted a study which found that more creative arts subjects were taken in 2015–16 than in 2011–12.²⁶ Nonetheless, the New Schools Network’s study found that schools had reduced funding for the arts which may have an effect on future GCSE study, and that the Government “must shoulder some blame” for the fact that some schools had “misunderstood the new performance measures, mistakenly thinking that in order to boost their EBacc results ... they need to steer resources from the arts and towards EBacc subjects.”²⁷

22 Q 39 (Sue Emmas)

23 Creative Industries Federation, *Social Mobility and the Skills Gap Creative Education Agenda 2016* (September 2016) p 5: <http://www.creativeindustriesfederation.com/assets/userfiles/files/Education%20Report%20web.pdf> [accessed 24 April 2017]

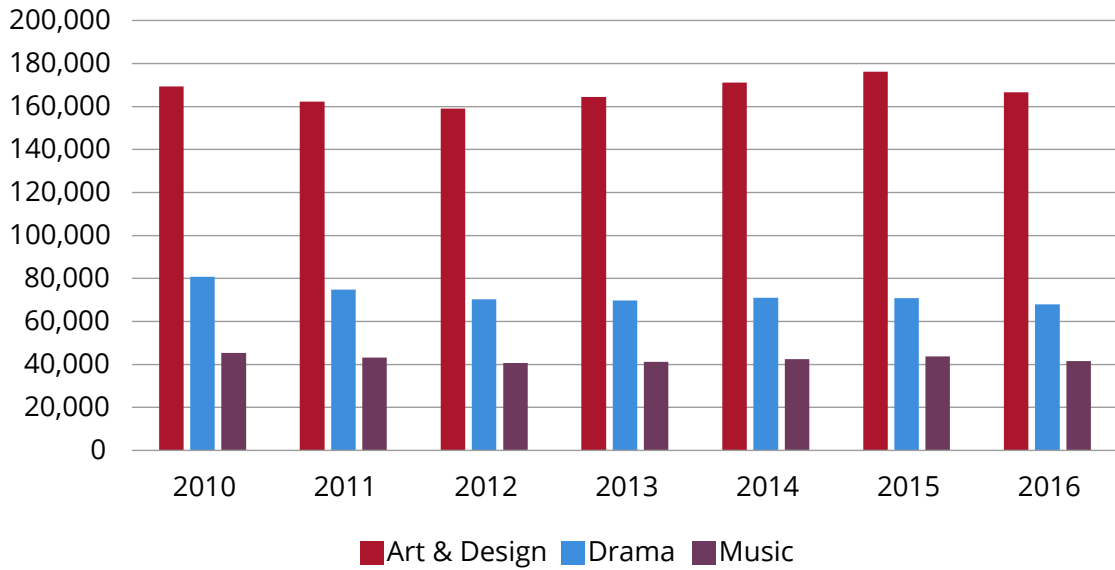
24 Q 49 (Matt Hancock MP)

25 Department for Education, *Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England: 2015 to 2016* (January 2017): <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/revised-gcse-and-equivalent-results-in-england-2015-to-2016> [accessed 24 April 2017]

26 New Schools Network, *The Two Cultures: Do schools have to choose between the EBacc and the arts?* (February 2017): http://www.newschoolsnetwork.org/sites/default/files/NSN%20Arts%20Report%20-%20The%20Two%20Cultures_0.pdf [accessed 24 April 2017]

27 *Ibid.*

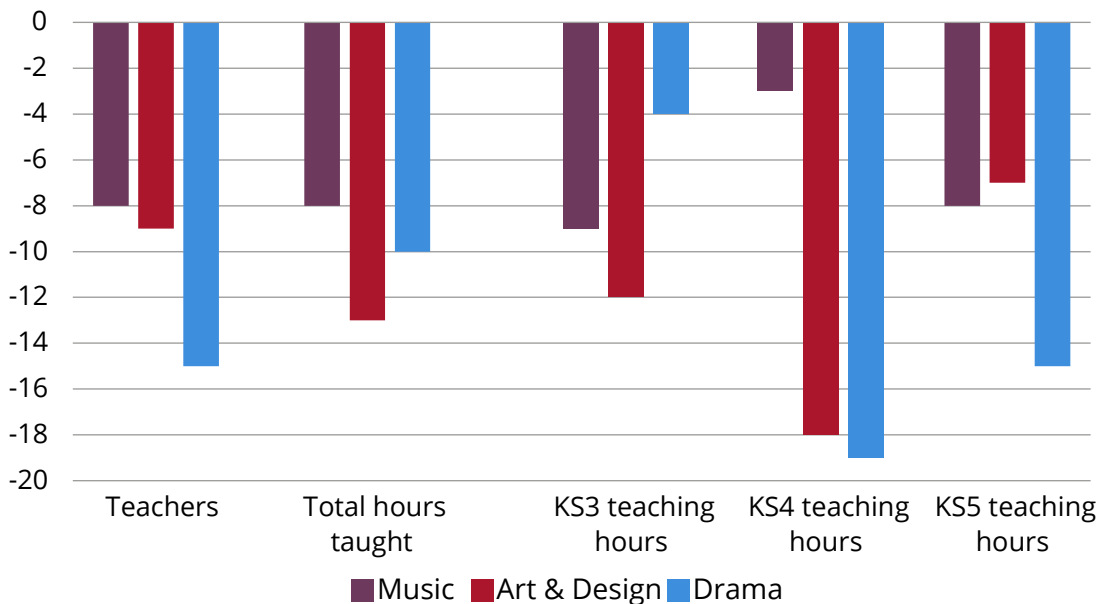
Figure 1: Number of GCSE or equivalent entries for Art & Design, Drama & Music, 2010–2016



Source: Department for Education, ‘Statistics: GCSEs (key stage 4)’: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-gcses-key-stage-4> [accessed 27 April 2017]

28. Indeed, there is evidence that schools have allocated resources away from the creative arts. For example, the table below shows a significant reduction in the number of teachers allocated to these subjects and the number of hours spent teaching them.

Figure 2: Percentage change in teachers and teaching hours in respect of creative arts subjects at Key Stages 3, 4 and 5



Source: Department for Education, *School workforce in England June 2016*: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2015>

29. At A-levels children begin to concentrate on subjects to take them through higher education and beyond. Professor Stephen Lacey, Chair of the

Standing Conference of University Drama Departments (SCUDD), told the Committee of the importance of having arts education at A-level:

“As the Government have recognised, having arts in the curriculum benefits all pupils. Pupils tend to do better if they are doing an arts subject, so that is important. Also, an arts subject studied at school helps students to orientate themselves towards what their future careers might be. They come understanding better what they are getting into, what they require, what they are being asked for. For those reasons, an arts subject within the A-level/BTEC profile, while not essential, is very useful.”²⁸

30. However, there is evidence that the number of students taking A-levels in performing and expressive arts, including dance, declined by 15 per cent in 2016, and the number taking drama A level declined by 6.4 per cent.²⁹ The table below shows that the number of entries for A-level or equivalent in arts subjects has fallen since 2010.

Table 2: Number of A-Level or equivalent entries for Art & Design, Drama and Music, 2010-2016

	Art & Design	Drama	Music
2010	42,784	15,262	8,841
2011	42,633	14,597	8,709
2012	43,236	13,670	8,203
2013	41,388	12,540	7,655
2014	40,763	11,806	7,184
2015	40,747	11,914	6,709
2016	39,503	11,208	6,155

Source: Department for Education, ‘Statistics: 15 to 19 attainment’: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-attainment-at-19-years> [accessed 27 April 2017]

31. GCSEs and A-levels must also cater for the technical skills required by the theatre. The House of Lords Committee on Soft Power and the UK’s Influence concluded that “Because of their role in developing the innovators of the future, we would also underline the importance of teaching design and technology in British schools.”³⁰
32. Professor Lacey told the Committee that “The Government are promoting STEM subjects. A number of us would rather that it was “STEAM” and arts were in that profile as well, so that we looked to promote the arts within broader education, not as a separate part.”³¹ Michelle Carwardine-Palmer said that it is “a huge issue that we do not have arts identified specifically within the STEM subjects.”³²

28 Q 14 (Prof Lacey)

29 Matthew Hemley, ‘Number of Students Taking Performing Arts A Level Drops 15%’, The Stage, 19 August 2016: <https://www.thestage.co.uk/news/2016/number-of-students-taking-performing-arts-a-level-drops-15/> [accessed 9 March 2017].

30 Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK’s influence, *Persuasion and Power in the Modern World* (Report of Session 2013–14, HL Paper 150)

31 Q 14 (Prof Lacey)

32 Q 32 (Michelle Carwardine-Palmer)

33. Above all, our witnesses called for a rounded education. The Minister said that, in his view:

“There is no contradiction between a high-quality rigorous education that aims at good exam results and good life chances and a rigorous artistic, musical and creative element to that education. Theatre has a big role to play in that.”³³

Teachers

34. Some witnesses pointed to a lack of specialist teachers in the field and the consequences for students and professionals. Professor Lacey told the Committee that schools were employing fewer teachers and therefore “some of our graduates, a proportion of whom would always go on to teaching, are finding that that avenue is closed to them.”³⁴
35. Alice King-Farlow of the National Theatre said that there were “very few specialist drama teachers in primary schools. Primary teachers are not trained in drama and many do not have the confidence to teach drama ... At secondary level, you need a specialist in the school to introduce students to the breadth of career opportunities in theatre.”³⁵
36. John Tiffany and Vicky Featherstone of the Royal Court Theatre told us that that the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland had also adapted their courses so that all dramatic arts students graduate with a teaching qualification. This had a double benefit of making them more employable and nurturing creativity in schools. They advocated a greater link between the DCMS and DfE.³⁶

School visits

37. School trips to the theatre were considered essential by some of our witnesses. Sue Emmas told us: “We definitely need to see at GCSE level students going to see drama and theatre.” She explained that studying without seeing productions is “a bit like understanding football but never touching a ball. You need to get a sense of the liveness of performative art.”³⁷
38. A number of witnesses pointed to the additional bureaucracy that some schools encountered when planning a school trip, which had resulted in fewer trips to the theatre. The Society of London Theatre told the Committee that:
- “Some of our members report quite a substantial reduction in the number of schools able to engage in theatre visits and bring children to their local theatre, which used to be fundamental ... but of course there is now a lack of funding and all the bureaucracy around those kinds of visits.”³⁸
39. At the Royal Court Theatre the Committee heard that a focus on core texts from the curriculum was needed to justify the cost of visits. This constrained the variety of theatre that pupils could be exposed to.

33 [Q 49](#) (Matt Hancock MP)

34 [Q 14](#) (Prof Lacey)

35 [Q 21](#) (Alice King-Farlow)

36 See Appendix 4.

37 [Q 39](#) (Sue Emmas)

38 [Q 6](#) (Julian Bird)

40. There are initiatives aimed at tackling these problems, such as the Globe Theatre’s ‘Playing Shakespeare’ event. This provides free tickets to state schools for performances at the Globe Theatre. A survey of participants found that 44 per cent had never been to a theatre before, which underlines the importance of this outreach work.³⁹

Extra-curricular

41. A number of witnesses stressed that exposure to the theatre could also be achieved through extra-curricular activities either within or outside school.
42. Some noted that a disparity of opportunity had developed between fee-paying and state education. Indhu Rubasingham told the Committee:

“Friends of mine who went through state education are often invited to public [fee-paying] schools to speak but never by the state schools, because with the pressure on performance and because of the EBacc they would rather deliver that.”⁴⁰

43. Alice King-Farlow stated:

“Local authority spending has been cut back so there are fewer extra-curricular activities, you have a lot of children at that early stage in education not getting their first encounter with theatre and drama. As part of a really good education, they should be getting the chance to make, to explore and to see theatre.”⁴¹

44. Bryan Raven, a trustee of a youth theatre in Putney, agreed. He said there had been, “an increasing trend that we are not able to charge the full amount for drama classes or after-school clubs. That percentage [of paying pupils not paying the full amount] is going up year on year, which is making it harder to balance the books. We try to run it on a not-for-profit basis.” He recommended that this sector would benefit from “cheap access to local government premises for running drama classes.”⁴²

45. Professor Lacey cautioned that relying on extra-curricular activities for exposure to theatre and drama could narrow access. He said, “However good the extra-curricular activity is, the opportunity to study the subject in school will always be preferable and more open to people from diverse backgrounds.”⁴³

46. The Committee noted the Creative Industries Federation Manifesto for the Creative Industries which recommends:

“Creative employment is resistant to automation, and adapting to the future jobs landscape will demand creative skills. Securing a workforce fit for the 21st century begins at school. A school must teach at least one creative subject, in lesson time, in order to be eligible for an ‘outstanding’ rating by Ofsted.”⁴⁴

39 BBC , ‘Half of teenagers ‘never been in a theatre’, (5 April 2017): <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-39479035> [accessed 24 April 2017]

40 Q 39 (Indhu Rubasingham)

41 Q 21 (Alice King-Farlow)

42 Q 14 (Bryan Raven)

43 Q 14 (Prof Lacey)

44 Creative Industries Federation, *A Manifesto for the Creative Industries* (April 2017): [http://www.creativeindustriesfederation.com/assets/userfiles/files/A%20Manifesto%20for%20the%20Creative%20Industries\(1\).pdf](http://www.creativeindustriesfederation.com/assets/userfiles/files/A%20Manifesto%20for%20the%20Creative%20Industries(1).pdf) [accessed 26 April 2017]

Careers advice

47. Witnesses spoke about the need to show children the potential for jobs in the theatre. A number of our witnesses were critical of the careers advice services provided in schools. Bryan Raven, Vice-Chair of the National College of Creative and Cultural Industries, told the Committee that “Our experience, both as an employer and in backstage training, is that careers advice is woeful.” He added: “There is a complete lack of awareness of the careers available in the creative industries.”⁴⁵
48. Alice King-Farlow told us that better careers advice was also necessary to create greater awareness of non-performance roles within theatre:
- “We need engineers, technicians and people trained in STEM subjects, as well as performers. In order to know that you can be a stage manager, or that you can be an engineer and work on the amazing stage automation systems in the end, you need that access to the specialist drama teacher or to the theatre that can show you a route in. Careers guidance is an issue.”⁴⁶
49. Some felt that this was a responsibility which should be shared by both schools and industry. Tony Peers, Human Resources Director at the National Theatre, agreed that there were “concerns” about career advice but recognised that “we also have a responsibility to make our industry interpretable”. He felt that they were “struggling for airtime in busy teachers’ daily lives” but also that the problem was understood and they were “making great strides in terms of setting out what it takes to join our industry and talking about career paths.”⁴⁷
50. Alice King-Farlow agreed that there was more the industry could do in this regard but that was only possible if “we have schools that are willing to work with us and will pick up the phone or open the letter that you send with your information.”⁴⁸
51. However, some witnesses suggested that jobs in the creative industries suffer from a fundamental ‘image problem’. As Alice King-Farlow told the Committee, “We are also countering a message that says, “These are not helpful subjects to study. If you do the arts, rather than STEM subjects, you are not going to get a job.””⁴⁹
52. The Minister, however, rejected this notion: “I think the arts and creative industries are increasingly seen as ambitious places for people to go for a career. Long gone are the days when being an actor or an actress is seen as a sign of failure in life. Now it is seen very much as a sign of success.” However, he acknowledged that there is “a role for Government in making sure that all young people, as they are going through what is a difficult transition in life for almost everybody—the transition from education into work—get to see all the opportunities that life presents.”⁵⁰

45 [Q 14](#) (Bryan Raven)

46 [Q 21](#) (Alice King-Farlow)

47 [Q 21](#) (Tony Peers)

48 [Q 22](#) (Alice King-Farlow)

49 *Ibid.*

50 [Q 47](#) (Matt Hancock MP)

CHAPTER 3: FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

53. Some witnesses noted that the UK has been successful in producing high-fliers but less so in producing the breadth of skills needed to support the industry, especially with respect to technical skill. Some witnesses criticised further and higher education providers for being too academic and placing insufficient emphasis on skills, with the result that they need to be taught on the job.
54. Creative & Cultural Skills is a non-profit organisation dedicated to giving young people opportunities to work and develop skills in the creative industries. In 2010 it reported that the “future workforce of the performing arts industry is composed of a large pool of ‘qualified’ potential recruits who do not have the specific ‘associated professional and technical’ skills that nearly half of jobs require.”⁵¹ In 2014, supported by the Government, and on behalf of a consortium of industry organisations, it established the National College for Creative and Cultural Industries to deliver courses on technical and production skills. The National College took its first students in 2016.
55. Witnesses also highlighted lack of diversity as a problem. Sue Emmas of the Young Vic stated, “We are not getting the diversity of talent that we need through higher education and the drama schools, which is a blockage in the talent pipeline.” She elaborated that by diversity she meant “in ethnicity, disability, socioeconomic status and geography, all of which are important, because a lot of people in theatre ... come from London and the south-east and we need to broaden where people come from.”⁵²

T-Levels

56. The Department for Education (DfE) took over responsibility for further education, skills and higher education in July 2016. Previously the further and higher education sectors were under the remit of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). In a Written Ministerial Statement, the Prime Minister said that “bringing these responsibilities together will mean that the government can take a comprehensive, end-to-end view of skills and education, supporting people from early years through to postgraduate study and work”.⁵³ The role of Minister of State for Skills, currently held by the Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP, is divided between the new Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and DfE.
57. At the same time, the Government decided to overhaul technical education. It noted that the current regime required young people to choose between “more than 20,000 courses provided by 160 different organisations with no clear indicator of which course will give them the best chance of landing a job”.⁵⁴ In March 2017 the Government announced, as part of the budget statement, funding for the introduction of T-levels—technical qualifications,

51 Creative and Cultural Skills, *The Performing Arts Blueprint* (February 2010): <https://ccskills.org.uk/downloads/1319721588-Performing-Arts-Blueprint.pdf> [accessed 24 April 2017]

52 Q 40 (Sue Emmas)

53 Written Ministerial Statement, *HCWS94*, 18 July 2016

54 Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, *Technical education overhaul unveiled by Skills Minister*, (8 July 2016): <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/technical-education-overhaul-unveiled-by-skills-minister> [accessed 24 April 2017]

an alternative to A-level—for 16 to 19-year-olds.⁵⁵ This will increase the number of hours students train by 50 per cent and replace the current 13,000 qualifications with 15 ‘routes’.

58. T-level routes include ‘design’. While there do not appear to be any routes which principally relate to the theatre, some routes will be applicable to the technical and administrative professions which support the arts and theatre. Bryan Raven, Vice-Chair of the National College of Creative and Cultural Industries, highlighted some possible issues with the new qualification: “One of the problems, if we go down the route of T-levels, is whether people doing hair and make-up are being made aware that there is a whole hair and make-up career path in the theatre, film and TV industries.”⁵⁶

Apprenticeships

59. Apprenticeships combine study with practical training in a job. Apprentices work alongside experienced staff, gain job-specific skills, and study towards a relevant qualification, whilst earning a wage. Employer groups, known as ‘trailblazers’, develop ‘standards’ documents which list the skills, knowledge and behaviours an apprentice needs to be competent in a defined occupation. These are then considered and approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Education.
60. The table below shows the number of apprenticeships undertaken in the arts, media and publishing sector:

Table 3: Apprenticeships in the arts, media and publishing sector

Age Group	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17 August to January
Under 19	680	600	740	730	610	260
19–24	490	450	650	680	590	240
25+	40	70	30	40	50	10

Source: Department for Education https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/601882/apprenticeships-level-SSA-framework-data-tool-starts-v1.xlsm [accessed 20 April 2017]

61. Tony Peers told the Committee that the National Theatre was motivated to create its own apprenticeship scheme because of:

“A sense of the lack of diversity coming through the further education system, to the degree that we felt we had to build our own model for creating skills within our sector, because we did not see any sign of them coming downstream in terms of education at the time.”⁵⁷

55 TES, ‘New ‘T-levels’ to replace thousands of post-16 vocational qualifications’ (5 March 2017): <https://www.tes.com/news/school-news/breaking-news/new-t-levels-replace-thousands-post-16-vocational-qualifications> [accessed 24 April 2017]

56 Q 14 (Bryan Raven)

57 Q 22 (Tony Peers)

62. Bryan Raven agreed that apprenticeships:

“Once we get them working properly, are a great leveller, because, rather than three years and £30,000 [in tuition fees], it is paid employment of £10–15,000. You are working, you are in there and you are straight into the workforce ... It is part of the core values of the National College. It is a one-year level 4 course; tuition fees are £5,000, which you can get a loan for. It is much more accessible than a three-year course.”⁵⁸

63. Sue Emmas told us that the Young Vic currently had five apprentices and found that the schemes had been “pretty successful” in increasing opportunities of access for a more diverse group of young people.⁵⁹64. However, some witnesses such as the Royal Court Theatre felt that the current system of apprenticeships was not fit for the purposes of the creative industries in general and theatre specifically. Julian Bird asked: “How can the apprenticeship schemes and the new qualifications work for our industry, which is unique compared to some other industries?”⁶⁰

65. Bryan Raven said that although he was a great believer in Trailblazer apprenticeships the current system did have problems. He told the Committee:

“We have been working on them for three years and have still not got them over the line. We are still teaching and including in our apprenticeships a qualification that, if it were the driving test, would include having a man walk out in front with a red flag and a starting handle. It is not fit for purpose. We use it as a way of unlocking the funding, but we actually teach our own curriculum, which is what the Trailblazer has been based on.”⁶¹

66. Some felt that changes in the way that the Government had overseen apprenticeship schemes had had an impact upon their effectiveness. Julia Bird of the Society of London Theatre said that the transfer of responsibility between Government departments had been “quite challenging.” he added, “We need to work on that transition very closely and work out how new apprenticeship schemes can apply in the theatre.”⁶² Bryan Raven told the Committee that:

“There is a problem with the qualifications coming through, for such a small, relatively niche industry. They take so long to get through. I understand all of that. BIS was moving faster; it has gone back to DfE. That has meant almost starting again in certain areas, which has not helped. I do not know whether that is right or wrong; I just know it has taken us longer.”⁶³

67. When asked whether enough time had been spent developing this particular apprenticeship, the Minister told the Committee:

“I would say the development of new Trailblazer apprenticeships, which are employer-led, has been a big step forward on what was there before.

58 [Q 18](#) (Bryan Raven)

59 [Q 41](#) (Sue Emmas)

60 [Q 7](#) (Julian Bird)

61 [Q 15](#) (Bryan Raven)

62 [Q 7](#) (Julian Bird)

63 [Q 15](#) (Bryan Raven)

Of course, the development of an apprenticeship standard, which is a valued qualification, has to be rigorous ... so we have to get it right.”⁶⁴

68. Witnesses told us of the burden that an apprentice can put on other members of staff in terms of the time staff needed to spend with them. Dr Hetherington told the Committee:

“What holds us back [from providing more apprenticeships] is the amount of time that staff have to spend teaching and training apprentices, which means that we are losing that person’s work. We are not just employing the apprentice, but we have to find additional hours of labour for other staff.”⁶⁵

69. Alice King-Farlow agreed that theatres only have “so much funding that we are able to spend on this. The introduction of the apprenticeship levy contributes to the cost of the training, but not to the cost of employing the apprentice. At the moment, that is taking more money out than it is bringing in.”⁶⁶
70. Sue Emmas also noted that the system “works for the larger organisations but less so for the smaller, because to take on an apprentice means quite a bit of responsibility.”⁶⁷

Scale

71. Bryan Raven told the Committee that the “colleges want 200 bricklayers or 300 hairdressers, because that is how they make their numbers add up. We have been losing money on delivering apprenticeships, because it costs the same amount to deliver 20 apprenticeships as it does to deliver 50 apprenticeships, more or less. It is expandable, but they will always be small numbers.”⁶⁸ He made clear that providing apprenticeships on a cost-effective basis is challenging in this industry.
72. The number of apprenticeships taken on by the sector is a comparatively small proportion of the total number of apprenticeships:

Table 4: Total number of apprenticeships

Sector Subject area	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17 ⁶⁹
Arts, Media and Publishing	1,210	1,120	1,410	1,460	1,250	510
All	520,600	510,200	440,400	499,900	509,400	258,800

Source: Department for Education https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/601882/apprenticeships-level-SSA-framework-data-tool-starts-v1.xlsm [accessed 20 April 2017]

64 Q 50 (Matt Hancock MP)

65 Q 35 (Dr Hetherington)

66 Q 23 (Alice King-Farlow)

67 Q 41 (Sue Emmas)

68 Q 15 (Bryan Raven)

69 Up to January 2017

73. Tony Peers of the National Theatre told the Committee that there is a danger that the scope of apprenticeships becoming so constrained that they are no longer adaptable for the industry. He said:

“The Department for Education quite understandably do not want 400 or 500 different apprenticeships scattered across the industry, because they lose all credibility. The difficulty is, in seeking to constrain, we find that, where an apprenticeship pathway that we once would have taken is too close to something else that, in our eyes, bears no relevance to our industry, we cannot go down that pathway.”⁷⁰

74. Indhu Rubasingham felt that apprenticeships “work in a wider definition in that they need to be tailor-made for the organisation. When that has been done as opposed to having something imposed on organisations, they are far more successful.” She acknowledged that “if there are too many regulations, it is easier for us to do our own traineeships.”⁷¹

75. Tony Peers was reassured by the flexibility of the system, saying:

“It is becoming less worrying to our industry as we realise that ... that kind of framework, with the ability to deviate from it, is what is intended. We feel heard by our Government, and we are starting to understand how it is going to work going forward.”⁷²

Degrees

76. Witnesses agreed that there were many possible options for study at degree level but that some of the skills needed in the industry were not being addressed by them. Sue Emmas told the Committee that there was “a proliferation of performing arts degrees, which is great”. She added, however:

“Sometimes they do not necessarily look at the skills that some of the industry might need. At the moment, there is a great need for producers, but not that much is taught in higher education about what it is to be a producer and the importance that they bring. I have 900 directors who are all desperate for a producer but who have about 50 to share between them.”⁷³

77. Dr Stephen Hetherington, Chairman and Co-founder of HQ Theatres Trust, told the Committee that:

“I have tried a number of times to get universities interested in MA courses, to add on to the courses they have. Every time, I get to a fairly high level and then it stalls. It stalls either because the programme is amalgamated into another programme that is not so specialised, or because the business department of the school refuses to have anything to do with it because it is the arts.”⁷⁴

78. The diversity of students enrolled on university courses was identified as a further problem. Professor Lacey told the Committee that “Universities tend to be whiter than the general population, and drama departments are the same”. However, he told us that universities are “more regionally,

70 [Q 23](#) (Tony Peers)

71 [Q 41](#) (Indhu Rubasingham)

72 [Q 23](#) (Tony Peers)

73 [Q 40](#) (Sue Emmas)

74 [Q 33](#) (Dr Hetherington)

geographically and socially variable than one might think”. He gave the example of the University of South Wales, which “has a high proportion of students on courses who are the first generation to go to university and who come from fairly working-class backgrounds.” He added that “It is a mixed picture. There are acres of complete whiteness and social exclusivity ... It is a problem. We need to do more about it.”⁷⁵

79. Some suggested that cost was now a barrier to taking degree level courses which previous generations had not had to contend with. Indhu Rubasingham told the Committee, “I had to convince my parents to let me do a drama degree. I do not know the cost [today], and I question today whether I would even ask, or whether I would be able to convince them.” She was concerned that “For that group of people who want to try for whatever reason but who are unsure, it will turn them off.”⁷⁶ This sentiment has been echoed by other senior figures in the industry.⁷⁷

75 [Q 18](#) (Prof Lacey)

76 [Q 40](#) (Indhu Rubasingham)

77 ‘Harry Potter stage magic will fail as arts education shrivels, warn top directors’, *The Guardian* (1 April 2017): <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2017/apr/01/theatre-funding-crisis-starve-british-talent-warns-directors> [accessed 24 April 2017]

CHAPTER 4: ENTRY LEVEL AND PROGRESSION

80. Many of our witnesses noted the hardship facing those aspiring to enter the theatre industry. The industry is a ‘gig-economy’—that is, individuals are paid for delivering a particular role for a finite term. They are rarely employees with continuous contracts. Moreover even successful actors who are regularly employed are not paid very highly.⁷⁸ According to one survey in 2014, just 1 in 50 actors earns more than £20,000 per year.⁷⁹ At the entry level, there is a strong incentive to work for free in order to gain the experience needed to go on to better paid roles. One route for gaining experience is at fringe festivals, where the costs of travel, accommodation and venue hire can easily exceed ticket sales.
81. Dr Dave O’Brien of the University of Edinburgh noted that the culture of unpaid work often prevented those who had come through education from entering the industry:
- “For those without the resources, social, cultural and economic, associated with affluent social origins, working for free was a clear form of exploitation with little expectation of it leading anywhere. This is important in the context of skills development, as the overriding narrative in the sector is that unpaid work is essential to getting in and getting on. However, the ability to benefit from unpaid work is closely associated with social origins.”⁸⁰
82. In conjunction with these low wages, the cost of living, especially in London where many theatres are located, is high and increasing. Dr Tom Cantrell, Head of Theatre, Film and Television at the University of York, told us, “Our students simply cannot afford to move to London, many find their first employment at their local theatre.”⁸¹ This problem has been compounded by the rise of tuition fees, which has acted to discourage young people from theatre, “because you come into an industry that is freelance and with very little immediate likelihood of being paid well. They have a student loan and a sense of debt.”⁸² It should be noted, however, that many of these problems are not peculiar to the theatre industry but are common for young people as they transition from education to work.
83. These difficulties may help to explain the underrepresentation of Black, Asian and Middle Eastern (BAME) individuals and those from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds in the theatre industry. Dr O’Brien summarised a report, which he co-wrote, which gave a picture of a “leaking pipeline of talent into the acting industry”, whereby those from poorer backgrounds face continuing barriers to joining the theatre industry throughout the education system and beyond.⁸³
84. Equity, a trade union for performers, has been conducting a campaign, ‘Professionally Made Professionally Paid’, to address the problem of low pay in the industry. According to Christine Payne, Equity’s general secretary,

78 Q 40 (See discussion between Sue Emmas and Indhu Rubasingham)

79 ‘Just one actor in 50 makes more than £20,000 per year, survey shows’, *The Independent* (28 May 2014): <http://www.independent.co.uk/incoming/just-one-actor-in-50-makes-more-than-20000-per-year-survey-shows-9448922.html> [accessed 27 April 2017]

80 Written evidence from Dr Dave O’Brien (STI0001)

81 Written evidence from Dr Tom Cantrell (STI0002)

82 Q 50 (Sue Emmas)

83 Written evidence from Dr Dave O’Brien (STI0001)

this was focused at fringe theatre where a particular problem of unpaid work had been identified:

“We meet with venues and producers, and encourage them to use our fringe contract. We have been very successful: 168 productions are using our contract, involving 800 performers, and we anticipate that around an extra £1 million has been paid to those performers as a result of the national minimum wage being paid.”⁸⁴

85. Ms Payne further advocated that the Government should support this initiative by making clear that when actors are in work they should be entitled to the minimum wage. She noted that this was a finding of the Government’s Low Pay Commission’s Report of 2010, which recommended that “the Government produces, in conjunction with interested parties, sector specific guidance on the National Minimum Wage for the entertainment sector.”⁸⁵
86. All of our other witnesses, including those representing employers, expressed commitment to paying the minimum wage and paid internships, and removing the expectation that people will work for free.⁸⁶ However, some noted that fringe work was problematic. Tony Peers of the National Theatre pointed out: “The arts is difficult, because it is vocational. It straddles the boundary between being a hobby and being a profession and, for some people, it never truly lands one side or the other.”⁸⁷
87. Mr Peers told us that at the National Theatre bursaries had been “incredibly important in supporting people through what is quite often a low-paid period in their life. Those are primarily coming from the private sector and from sponsorship, but any help there would be valuable.”⁸⁸
88. While praising Equity’s ‘Professionally Made Professionally Paid’ campaign, Sue Emmas cautioned:
- “It does not recognise that all these people pouring out of university and drama school are essentially start-up companies, because most people will come together and create a company with a bunch of friends.”⁸⁹
89. Ms Emmas noted that a number of successful theatre companies have been no more than “people with brilliant ideas and a lot of entrepreneurial spirit.” She argued that such people should be supported:
- “They will not get paid very much to begin with, but equally if you set up a PR company you will probably not get much pay to begin with, and you will call in favours from friends and work for free yourself. We need to accept that in the industry that is something to celebrate, not to necessarily push back on.”⁹⁰
90. Some of our witnesses argued that some young people do not have the practical skills to help them to cope with the freelance nature of theatre

84 Q 8

85 Low Pay Commission, *National Minimum Wage, 2010*: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/238449/7823.pdf [accessed 11 April 2017]

86 e.g. Q 8 (Julian Bird)

87 Q 25 (Tony Peers)

88 Q 24 (Tony Peers)

89 Q 40 (Sue Emmas)

90 *Ibid.*

work. For example, Michelle Carwardine-Palmer of National Theatre Wales told us:

“Many people are saying that they come out of college with no business skills. They do not know how to set themselves up as freelancers. They do not know how to do tax returns. That is the simple skills basis that would put them into a really good position. One person from our TEAM panel [which advises on recruitment and training] mentioned that he was told how to put a promotional video on, but then did not know how to do anything if someone said, “Yes, I want to hire you”. What are the next steps?”⁹¹

91. On the other hand, Dr Tom Cantrell told us that students at the University of York are assessed “on budgeting, production management, model box making, writing copy for publicity, as well as for acting, directing and scriptwriting.”⁹²
92. Dr O’Brien noted in written evidence that those entering the theatre industry had to develop networks, or “social capital” to progress. He suggested that those hiring should also make effort to broaden their networks of possible recruits:

“[So that] they have access to a much more consistent pipeline of talent outside of their existing, often socially, ethnically, and gender-closed, networks ... It is important any recommendations dealing with the ‘supply side’ of skilled workers take the social context of the theatre industry into account. Otherwise the hidden barriers, of pay gaps, casting assumptions, or gendered and classed exclusions, will continue.”⁹³
93. In general, many witnesses working in the industry told us that they were already doing much to try to appeal to individuals from different backgrounds. Many of our witnesses provided outreach programmes. For example, the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) acknowledges that there is a problem with young people from low-income families being underrepresented across the industry. It has therefore launched a scheme, ‘RSC Next Generation’, which works with 10 regional theatres and with its Associate Schools across the country.⁹⁴
94. The RSC also noted that working in the theatre industry presents particular problems for those with children: “We are probably the only theatre in the UK with its own Nursery, with places for 50 children, and we are currently exploring extended opening hours and other services to help staff with evening commitments.”⁹⁵
95. The National Theatre has set itself a number of targets for 2021, for example, for a minimum of 25% of performers on stage to be from a BAME background. This was not expected to be overly ambitious, and somewhere in the region of 30% of performers at the National are already from BAME backgrounds. Tony Peers explained that they achieved this through early adoption of colour-blind casting:

91 [Q 33](#) (Michelle Carwardine-Palmer)

92 Written evidence from Dr Tom Cantrell ([STI0002](#))

93 Written evidence from Dr Dave O’Brien ([STI0001](#))

94 Written evidence from Royal Shakespeare Company ([STI0004](#))

95 Written evidence from Royal Shakespeare Company ([STI0004](#))

“The best actor should be performing the role and race is irrelevant. We know that, in order to be a successful actor, you need to string together a series of jobs and, therefore, you always need the opportunity to get work, regardless of whether we are doing Shakespeare or something set in the modern day.”⁹⁶

96. Unfortunately, as Michelle Carwardine-Palmer pointed out, a shift in policy may not be as necessary as a fundamental shift in culture:

“When we cast a black Hermione in a West End production and there is outcry, why? There should not be. We can cast however we want to cast. It should be about the strengths of the individual and their ability to undertake the role. For the subsidised arts, we need to constantly challenge that because it is not about government policy; it is about shifting culture, and the best place to shift culture is through the arts.”⁹⁷

Arts Council England has also done much work to tackle the problem of lack of diversity, not least by collecting and publishing data within the sector. Through its programme, the ‘Creative Case for Diversity’, Arts Council England has sought further to promote diversity as an integral approach to the arts.⁹⁸

97. Despite these positive steps, some witnesses have cautioned that there is a risk that cuts to funding may cause regression with respect to diversity. For example, Tony Peers of the National Theatre told us about Creative Access, which was supported by the Government to provide paid internships for British BAME graduates across the creative sector. According to Mr Peers, it had been “incredibly transformational in terms of the recruitment to what you might call artistic administrative posts [but] for various reasons, Creative Access lost its funding and is now set up as a social enterprise rather than a charity.”⁹⁹

At work training and Continuing Professional Development

98. Our witnesses identified at-work training and continuing professional development as a particular challenge presented by the freelance nature of theatre work. As Bryan Raven of the National College of Cultural and Creative Industries told us:

“Freelance, self-employed people do not want to give up a day’s work; they do not want to pay for the course; they do not want to be seen signing up for a particular course.”¹⁰⁰

He suggested: “I have long thought that Government could support both employers and the self-employed through some kind of tax relief on proper, legitimate training.”¹⁰¹

99. Tony Peers of the National Theatre agreed that tax relief should be available, especially for the self-employed, but he also cautioned that the industry as a whole has responsibility:

96 [Q 26](#) (Tony Peers)

97 [Q 38](#) (Michelle Carwardine-Palmer)

98 Arts Council England, *Creative Case for Diversity*: <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/diversity-and-equality/creative-case-diversity> [accessed 11 April 2017]

99 [Q 24](#) (Tony Peers)

100 [Q 19](#) (Bryan Raven)

101 *Ibid.*

“Our industry has not been fantastic at thinking, as it should have done, about the type of skills that are needed. It almost coasts along on the fact that there are invariably more people looking for work than there are jobs, and that there is a lot of tradition in there.”¹⁰²

100. Michelle Carwardine-Palmer noted that National Theatre Wales had shown some good practice in this context:

“We have a funded scheme through the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, which is a creative development framework. Part of that is around the continued professional development of freelancers to give them the skills that they are asking for. We have run, for example, sessions on VAT, tax returns and how to set yourself up as an organisation, as well as the more vocational side of things.”¹⁰³

102 [Q 26](#) (Tony Peers)

103 [Q 36](#) (Michelle Carwardine-Palmer)

CHAPTER 5: FUNDING THE SKILLS OF THE FUTURE WORKFORCE

Ecology of the theatre

101. Julian Bird, chief executive of both the Society of London Theatre and UK Theatre, noted that the West End is in a sense “very different from the rest of theatre” and that many of the main London theatres are privately owned. By contrast, around the UK, many venues “are owned by trusts, foundations, charities or local authorities themselves, which are hugely reliant on local government spending.”¹⁰⁴
102. Arts Council England (ACE) is another major source of funding for theatre. It allocates funds by direct grants to individuals and organisations working in theatre, but the vast majority is allocated on a regular basis to National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs). While some of these are still quite small, some receive significant funding, such as the National Theatre in London and the Royal Shakespeare Company which operates throughout the country. ACE told us that a reduction in public funding for arts and culture led to a 4% cash decrease in its funding for theatres between 2010–11 and 2014–15.¹⁰⁵
103. ACE also noted that between 2010–11 and 2014–15, “local government funding for the arts, museums and libraries declined by 17%, from £1.42bn to £1.19bn. Local authority investment in theatre in that time fell by 18%, a loss of £31m.”¹⁰⁶
104. Julian Bird gave graphic detail of the effects of these cuts, saying that there was a danger of “certain parts of the country becoming a little like deserts with no arts provision.” He drew our attention to “a catalogue of examples” of areas where venues are closing, or are under severe strain and on the verge of closing.¹⁰⁷
105. Christine Payne of Equity warned that the real danger has not yet been realised: “We really are starting to see the impact of some of the cuts that local authorities are having to make. Theatre is responding by doing its best, but I think the crisis is yet to come.”

Commercial and publicly funded theatre

106. There are significant interrelationships between the publicly funded and the commercial, and between the West End and the regional theatre. These interrelationships are necessary to maintain the theatre’s income and to develop the skills of the people who sustain it. This set of interrelationships is sometimes referred to as the ‘ecology’ of the theatre, because if elements of it are overstrained, there is a risk that knock-on effects will affect the rest of the industry.
107. Dr Hetherington, the chair of an independent theatre trust, has undertaken research into the interrelationship between publicly funded and commercial theatre. He told the Committee that subsidies account for “about 14% of the income of British theatre”, the remaining 86% being earned income. He qualified these figures, however, noting that the way statistics are kept on

104 [Q 2](#) (Julian Bird)

105 Written evidence from Arts Council England ([STI0005](#))

106 Written evidence from Arts Council England ([STI0005](#))

107 [Q 2](#) (Julian Bird)

this is “diabolical”.¹⁰⁸ He told us that his organisation had been able in the past to present productions without subsidies from local authorities, “but there is a hidden subsidy in everything across British theatre”. For, while the theatre that he managed was not subsidised, the producing company probably will be. Dr Hetherington’s company was able to do this because his theatres were all ‘receiving’ or ‘presenting’ theatres—that is, they do not develop productions themselves but rely on external companies to perform their productions at their locations. He concluded: “Practically every theatre in the UK, excluding a number of the West End theatres—not all of them—is subsidised to some degree, even though it might be quite a small degree.”¹⁰⁹

108. Some witnesses noted that the reduction of public funds caused by local authority cuts has encouraged some theatres that were previously producing to become receiving only. Christine Payne of Equity explained how this adversely affected the possibility of developing new work, new writing and new productions—the features which make theatre in the UK unique:

“If we have to be more reliant on buying product in, it has an impact not only on what we see but on the local community. For example, Newcastle would have employed actors locally; it would have supported the community locally. Now productions come in and then they go, and that has an impact on the economy as well as on what you might see. Theatre is doing its best to adapt to these trends, but the crisis is getting worse.”¹¹⁰

109. Dr Hetherington noted that receiving theatres do create value for the local area where a play is presented, but he agreed that local authority cuts had caused a shift from producing to presenting, and that this was “corrosive”.¹¹¹ This is likely to lead to “considerable problems” in the long term: “If we do not have the product to put in front of the public, the whole thing breaks down, like a supermarket with nothing to sell.”¹¹²

110. A number of our witnesses compared investment in regional and subsidised theatre to research and development for the industry. Alice King-Farlow of the National Theatre, a large and prominent subsidised theatre, explained that even there similar subsidies are necessary to help develop profitable productions:

“We were able to take the risks to invest in the research and development needed to make *War Horse* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, because of our subsidy in the studio, which is our R&D department. Yes, you cannot just cook up a commercial production without having the subsidy to take the risks.”¹¹³

111. However, this is not only the case within theatres. Alice King-Farlow described the National Theatre as being “at the top of the food chain and we depend on a thriving sector right across the country”.¹¹⁴ In particular, a number of our witnesses told us that successful commercial productions

108 [Q 29](#) (Dr Hetherington)

109 *Ibid.*

110 [Q 2](#) (Christine Payne)

111 [Q 31](#) (Dr Hetherington)

112 [Q 29](#) (Dr Hetherington)

113 [Q 27](#) (Alice King-Farlow)

114 *Ibid.*

would not be possible without crew members who have spent a number of years in subsidised and regional theatre.¹¹⁵

112. This development of skills does not end with the West End. Julian Bird told us:

“With regard to film and television, the theatre and performing arts is often the catalyst. It is the starting point for people’s careers. There is probably no doubt that, collectively, we all have to do more work together across the industries, and maybe it comes back the other way as well: not just what theatre can do but what the film and television world can do.”¹¹⁶

113. However, the development of a strong country-wide theatre industry has utility in itself. Dr Hetherington told us that cultural industries exist for social and economic reasons “but also to do with the fabric and well-being of our nation, what it means to us as individuals, how we live our lives and all those things that are packed into that idea of the arts. If those things are to continue to grow, succeed and not wither, there are particular areas that have to be addressed.” Michelle Carwardine-Palmer of National Theatre Wales told us: “The London-centric thing is an issue ... There is probably enough supply, but possibly not in the right areas. Coming back to clusters, do we look to city deals, regionalisation and devolving funds in order for people to have a better lifestyle because they can afford it in Cardiff or in Bangor? How are there different ways in which we can diversify that pot and help the industry still create excellent work?”

How theatre is coping with cuts

114. Christine Payne told us that the theatre was doing its best to deal with cuts to subsidies, in particular, by trying to use its resources differently. But she noted, “You can do that for so long. [Theatre] is using its resources differently, for example, by sharing resources, increased co-production, pressure on cast sizes, pressure on new writing, pressure on how many productions a theatre can do, even pressure on what the theatre itself does.”¹¹⁷
115. In recognition of the fact that publicly funded and regional theatre is essential for the maintenance of commercial theatre, some have argued that the commercial theatre ought to contribute back. Julian Bird told us:

“At the SOLT and UK Theatre, we are trying to work with some of those big companies, both commercial and the major subsidised companies, to try to ensure there is overlap and that the available resources are being used to the best of their ability. I include organisations such as Disney in that, as much as the RSC or the National Theatre. One of the big things we currently have under way is trying to look at a new approach to the joined up nature of all that.”¹¹⁸

116. According to Alice King-Farlow, the National Theatre has seen “a big cut to our funding from Arts Council. It is something like 35% in real terms over the last five years.” Fortunately, the National Theatre was able to mitigate some of these losses by producing some plays that have been very successful

115 e.g. John Tiffany

116 [Q 11](#) (Julian Bird)

117 [Q 57](#) (Christine Payne)

118 [Q 58](#) (Julian Bird)

commercially both on tour and in the West End, notably *War Horse* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*:

“They have provided income streams to the organisation, which we cannot depend on in the very long term because they depend on the success of a particular production, but they have been extremely helpful to us over the last five years.”¹¹⁹

117. Other witnesses also warned that relying on such commercially successful shows was not feasible because such successes were so rare.

118. Given that it is likely that theatre will need to continue to rely on philanthropy, fundraising has assumed an important role within theatres. As Alice King-Farlow told us:

“We are asking a lot more of our fundraising department, which is very effective and very successful. That is one of the issues: it is easier to be a fundraising department for a big national organisation based in London than it is to fundraise if you are a small organisation outside London. We try to be as entrepreneurial as we can, through the fundraising department, the commercial department and the way we run our own restaurants and bars.”¹²⁰

119. Julian Bird explained further: “Arts organisations the length and breadth of the country have become very good at this. They have had to become very good at it very quickly. Lots of organisations, such as us, on behalf of the industry, run training schemes for them on it. They can apply for funds to the Arts Council. It is called “catalyst funding” and does exactly what it says, acting as a catalyst on resources or on the way of doing it.”¹²¹

120. However, Mr Bird warned: “It is sometimes implied that every organisation can raise the same sort of money that the National Theatre or the RSC can, and we are seeing that that is not the case.”¹²²

121. During our visit to the Royal Court, we were told that there is a growing need for professional fundraisers who specialise in Arts and Heritage. Sue Emmas told us, “You can be a writer and a fundraiser at the same time. Going to people and convincing them of the real import of theatre and the reason for funding can be incredibly creative. There are some areas that we may need to focus on more, such as the different career opportunities that higher education can provide the industry.”

Role of Government

122. Matt Hancock MP, the Minister for Digital and Culture, told us if the Government were to increase funding as a substitute for local authority cuts, this would “simply provide local authorities with the incentive to reduce arts funding further”. He noted that some authorities have given greater priority to funding for the arts than others, and emphasised that this was a political choice for them.¹²³

119 [Q 29](#) (Alice King-Farlow)

120 [Q 27](#) (Alice King-Farlow)

121 [Q 59](#) (Julian Bird)

122 *Ibid.*

123 [Q 54](#) (Matt Hancock MP)

123. Nonetheless, Christine Payne argued that the Government needed to take a greater lead: “It seems like local authorities are almost rudderless in how they are addressing some of the very serious funding crises and issues they face, and arts funding is bound, in some case, to take a lower priority.”¹²⁴
124. Ms Payne also noted that there had been a lack of contribution to theatre from film and television:
- “Just as we have talked about subsidised and commercial theatre being very close, the overlap between theatre, film and television should not be underestimated. The film and television employers could do more to support our members, in particular, and the industry. The theatre industry has a very proud record of supporting developing actors, not so much for the film and television side. It has not shown a great support for our members through Skillset, CCSkills or even Drama UK, when it existed. They could do a lot more, to be honest.”¹²⁵
125. Moreover, there appears to be a wider lack of dialogue between the Government and the theatre industry. While on our visit to the Royal Court Theatre we were told by Vicky Featherstone and John Tiffany that when they worked in Scotland, the Scottish government kept in regular contact, whereas this is not the case with the UK Government. The Government has established the Creative Industries Council to be a voice for the creative industries. Co-chaired by Ministers, its membership includes heads of industries including television, computer games, fashion, music, arts and publishing, but not theatre. Speaking in the context of the forthcoming Brexit negotiations, Christine Payne and Julian Bird agreed that the theatre industry should have a more effective voice with the Government and a place on the Creative Industries Council.

124 [Q 58](#) (Christine Payne)

125 [Q 66](#) (Christine Payne)

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF MEMBERS AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members

Lord Allen of Kensington
 Baroness Benjamin
 Lord Best (Chairman)
 Baroness Bonham-Carter of Yarnbury
 Earl of Caithness
 Bishop of Chelmsford
 Lord Gilbert of Panteg
 Lord Hart of Chilton
 Baroness Kidron
 Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall
 Baroness Quin
 Lord Sheikh
 Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury

Declarations of interest

Lord Allen of Kensington
Chairman, Global Radio Group (sponsor of UTC Global Academy)
Advisory Chairman, Moelis & Company (also advises media companies)
Owns a share of over £50,000 in ITV plc
Partner is a Trustee of the Print Room in Notting Hill

Baroness Benjamin
Member, Equity
Patron, Action of Children's Arts
Fellow, Shakespeare Trust
Honorary Fellow, British Screen Practitioners
Supporter/Patron, Globe Education

Lord Best (Chairman)
Vice Patron, York Theatre Royal

Baroness Bonham-Carter of Yarnbury
Trustee, The Lowry Salford Quays

Earl of Caithness
No relevant interests declared

Bishop of Chelmsford
No relevant interests declared

Lord Gilbert of Panteg
No relevant interests declared

Lord Hart of Chilton
Lord Hart did not participate in any proceedings for this inquiry

Baroness Kidron
Husband is a playwright
Director, Cross Street Films, a small company that develops film to theatre projects

Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall
Deputy Chairman, Royal Shakespeare Company
Trustee, Southbank Sinfonia
Formerly Executive Director, Royal National Theatre
Life member, SOLT

Baroness Quin

No relevant interests declared

Lord Sheikh

No relevant interests declared

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury

No relevant interests declared

A full list of Members' interests can be found in the Register of Lords' Interests:
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld/ldreg.htm>

Specialist advisor

Professor Jen Harvie, BA, MA, Phd

*Professor of Contemporary Theatre and Performance and Director of
Research School of English and Drama, Queen Mary University of London*

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF WITNESSES

Evidence is published online at <http://www.parliament.uk/skills-theatre-industry> and available for inspection at the Parliamentary Archives (020 7219 3074).

Evidence received by the Committee is listed below in chronological order of oral evidence session and in alphabetical order. Those witnesses marked with ** gave both oral evidence and written evidence. Those marked with * gave oral evidence and did not submit any written evidence. All other witnesses submitted written evidence only.

Oral evidence in chronological order

- | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------|
| * | Christine Payne, General Secretary, Equity Actors' Union | <u>QQ 1–12</u> |
| * | Julian Bird, CEO, UK Theatre and Society of London Theatre. | |
| * | Professor Stephen Lacey, Chair, Standing Conference of University Drama Departments | <u>QQ 13–20</u> |
| * | Bryan Raven, Vice-Chair, National College for the Creative and Cultural Industries | |
| * | Alice King-Farlow, Director of Learning, National Theatre | <u>QQ 21–27</u> |
| * | Tony Peers, Human Resources Director, National Theatre | |
| * | Michelle Carwardine-Palmer, Managing Director, National Theatre Wales | <u>QQ 28–37</u> |
| * | Dr Stephen Hetherington MBE, Chairman and Co-founder, HQ Theatres Trust | |
| * | Indhu Rubasingham MBE, Artistic Director, Tricycle Theatre | <u>QQ 38–45</u> |
| * | Sue Emmas, Associate Artistic Director, Young Vic | |
| * | Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP, Minister of State for Digital and Culture, Department for Culture, Media and Sport | <u>QQ 46–55</u> |

Alphabetical list of all witnesses

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------|
| | Arts Council England | <u>STI0005</u> |
| | Dr Tom Cantrell, Head of Theatre, Film and Television, University of York | <u>STI0002</u> |
| * | Department for Culture, Media and Sport (QQ 46–55) | |
| * | Equity Actors' Union (QQ 1–12) | |
| * | HQ Theatres Trust (QQ 28–37) | |
| * | National College for the Creative and Cultural Industries (QQ 13–20) | |
| * | National Theatre (QQ 21–27) | |

- * National Theatre Wales (QQ 28–37)
 - Dr Dave O’Brien, Chancellor’s Fellow, Cultural and Creative Industries, University of Edinburgh [STI0001](#)
 - Royal Court Theatre [STI0003](#)
 - Royal Shakespeare Company [STI0004](#)
- * Standing Conference of University Drama Departments (QQ 13–20)
- * Tricycle Theatre (QQ 38–45)
- * UK Theatre and Society of London Theatre (QQ 1–12)
- * Young Vic (QQ 38–45)

APPENDIX 3: APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME STARTS

Level	Age Group	Sector Subject Area	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17 August to January
Intermediate Apprenticeship	Under 19	Arts, Media and Publishing	120	100	150	150	120	50
Intermediate Apprenticeship	19–24	Arts, Media and Publishing	130	130	190	160	130	60
Intermediate Apprenticeship	25+	Arts, Media and Publishing	-	10	10	-	10	-
Intermediate Apprenticeship	All	Arts, Media and Publishing	260	240	340	310	260	110
Advanced Apprenticeship	Under 19	Arts, Media and Publishing	560	500	580	570	460	200
Advanced Apprenticeship	19–24	Arts, Media and Publishing	350	320	450	500	440	170
Advanced Apprenticeship	25+	Arts, Media and Publishing	40	60	20	40	40	10
Advanced Apprenticeship	All	Arts, Media and Publishing	960	880	1,050	1,110	940	380
Higher Apprenticeship	Under 19	Arts, Media and Publishing	-	-	10	20	30	10
Higher Apprenticeship	19–24	Arts, Media and Publishing	-	10	20	20	30	10
Higher Apprenticeship	25+	Arts, Media and Publishing	-	-	-	-	10	-
Higher Apprenticeship	All	Arts, Media and Publishing	-	10	30	40	60	20

Level	Age Group	Sector Subject Area	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17 August to January
All Apprenticeships	Under 19	Arts, Media and Publishing	680	600	740	730	610	260
All Apprenticeships	19–24	Arts, Media and Publishing	490	450	650	680	590	240
All Apprenticeships	25+	Arts, Media and Publishing	40	70	30	40	50	10
All Apprenticeships	All	Arts, Media and Publishing	1,210	1,120	1,410	1,460	1,250	510
Totals relating to All SSA								
Intermediate Apprenticeship	Under 19	All	95,400	80,900	83,400	85,600	86,900	52,700
Intermediate Apprenticeship	19–24	All	101,700	99,000	97,000	93,600	84,900	38,400
Intermediate Apprenticeship	25+	All	131,900	112,900	106,100	119,100	119,500	50,300
Intermediate Apprenticeship	All	All	329,000	292,800	286,500	298,300	291,300	141,400
Advanced Apprenticeship	Under 19	All	34,100	33,100	35,600	39,100	42,700	28,500
Advanced Apprenticeship	19–24	All	58,000	63,900	59,300	62,400	63,100	33,400
Advanced Apprenticeship	25+	All	95,700	110,600	49,800	80,300	85,000	39,300

Level	Age Group	Sector Subject Area	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17 August to January
Advanced Apprenticeship	All	All	187,900	207,700	144,700	181,800	190,900	101,200
Higher Apprenticeship	Under 19	All	300	600	700	1,100	1,800	1,400
Higher Apprenticeship	19–24	All	1,700	2,400	2,900	4,200	5,800	4,100
Higher Apprenticeship	25+	All	1,700	6,800	5,600	14,400	19,600	10,700
Higher Apprenticeship	All	All	3,700	9,800	9,200	19,800	27,200	16,200
All Apprenticeships	Under 19	All	129,900	114,500	119,800	125,900	131,400	82,600
All Apprenticeships	19–24	All	161,400	165,400	159,100	160,200	153,900	75,900
All Apprenticeships	25+	All	229,300	230,300	161,600	213,900	224,100	100,300
All Apprenticeships	All	All	520,600	510,200	440,400	499,900	509,400	258,800

Source: Department for Education https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/601882/apprenticeships-level-SSA-framework-data-tool-starts-v1.xlsm [accessed 20 April 2017]

Figures between academic years 11/12 to 15/16 are full, final year figures, whereas the 16/17 figures are those reported so far by quarter 2 in the latest year (covering August 2016 to January 2017).

Where there is a ‘-’ in the table, the figure has been suppressed as it is less than 5.

APPENDIX 4: VISIT

On 21 March the Committee visited the Royal Court Theatre, a non-commercial theatre which is known for producing the work of contemporary playwrights. The purpose of this visit was to meet individuals in a range of different roles. A tour of the building was also arranged for the Members. In this note we set out an overview of the key themes of the discussion.

Session 1

Speakers: Vicky Featherstone, Artistic Director; Lucy Davies, Executive Producer; and Steven Kavuma, a student at the Central School of Speech and Drama

Concern was expressed that over the past few decades theatre had moved away from being an egalitarian industry to one where those from elite universities, with access to social networks and with appropriate role models had become disproportionately successful. The Royal Court had sought to counter this shift by promoting writing from individuals from diverse backgrounds whose plays reflected their experiences and included roles for people from similar backgrounds.

With regard to the higher level of theatre management, trust boards were relatively diverse compared to other industries. They did not consider gender inequality to be an issue but progress on diversity in general had remained slow. The relationship between careers in commercial and non-commercial theatre is porous. However, non-profit theatre has a particular role in demonstrating cultural leadership.

By comparison to London, Glasgow provided an easier route into theatre because of cheaper cost of living and free university. This provided space for young people to develop intellectually. The speakers advocated the development of regional theatre, but also freedom of movement.

Schools are very grade-oriented and drama is not seen as a realistic lifestyle. This is reinforced through the curriculum, career advice and parental anxiety. The student that the Committee spoke to had to access drama through an outreach programme outside of school. He also told members of the Committee that another young man, whom he had contacted through an outreach programme, had declined to apply for an elite theatre school because he felt that he would have to be “a revolutionary every day”. Graduate opportunities have not changed but expectations for graduates to get job straightaway have increased. Student debt is an impetus.

There are many more courses taught at dramatic arts schools. It was questioned whether this was necessarily a good thing or an attempt to commodify something which should be learned through experience. Speakers criticised certain dramatic arts schools for recruiting more students than the number that can reasonably be expected to obtain jobs in the theatre industry.

Speakers urged that policy should be developed with the advice of experts. They noted that in Scotland, the government had much more open lines of communications with the theatre industry. As a result the drama schools had put creativity at the heart of their curriculums.

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland had also adapted their courses so that all dramatic arts students graduate with a teaching qualification. This had a double benefit of (a) making them more employable and (b) nurturing creativity in schools. A greater link between culture and education departments was advocated.

Making theatre accessible to a more diverse audience has benefits. BAME audiences seeing all white theatre casts can reinforce perceptions that they do not have a place in the theatre.

Speakers suggested that quotas for BAME students at drama schools might help them to feel less excluded. This would need should also apply to stage management and technical courses. In other areas of the country with smaller BAME populations, quotas might not be appropriate. Ultimately the aim would be to have drama schools which are representative and inclusive, and which reflect the local community.

Session 2

Speakers: Catherine Thornborrow, General Manager; Helen Perryer, Finance Director; Liv Nilssen, Development Director; Steven Binks, Head of Lighting

The Royal Court had a scheme to recruit up to five trainees a year to be paid on London living wage. The trainees were also allocated money for training. This cost the Royal Court between £25–26,000 per year per trainee, and it could only afford this through charitable grants from the Sackler Trust. They were coming towards the end of the grant period so would have to apply again to continue the scheme. Furthermore, the speakers noted that there was no nation-wide equivalent of this scheme. Managers at the Royal Court had provided informal financial planning advice to their trainees, and noted that the cost of living put great pressure on them.

Apprenticeships: The Royal Court had decided to discontinue its participation in apprenticeship schemes because they felt that they were no longer fit for purpose. They had become overly complicated requiring the teaching of a greater range of skills than was necessary or appropriate for the role that the theatre needed. For example, the costume apprenticeship had been replaced with one that taught venue management. It was also suggested that apprenticeships would be more attractive if it were clearer what job opportunities followed.

The theatre industry raised a lot of money for the economy, but subsidies were still needed to develop talent. Nearly all those involved in commercial theatre will have spent many years in the subsidised theatre. Therefore it should be seen as ‘research and development’ for the industry. Television and film also rely on this. For example, it can cost the Royal Court £80–100,000 to put on a run. No commercial theatre would be willing to take such risks. Theatre tax relief is a useful to cover gaps in funding but is not sufficient by itself. Arts Council England had also frozen funding to London.

It was felt that university courses in lighting were too academic and theoretical with not enough focus on skills. The UK had developed a high standard of skills (especially taking account of health and safety standards), but there was still a skills gap. Other speakers were less sure that there was a skills shortage.

Liv Nilssen reported to the committee on the continually increasing need for Arts and Heritage specialist fundraisers.

Session 3

Speakers: Chris Campbell, Literary Manager; Chris Sonnex, Artistic Associate and Head of 'Beyond the Court' outreach programmes in Tottenham and Pimlico; Romana Fello, Head of the 'Young Court' youth outreach programme; John Tiffany, Theatre Director

It was noted that some subsidised theatres had put on financially successful runs such as *Matilda* by the Royal Shakespeare Company and *War Horse* by the National Theatre. However, such plays took a number of years to be developed, during which time they were supported by large public funds—which would not have been available to lower profile theatres.

The Royal Court purposely produces newer plays and this can deter schools as schools tend to arrange visits for performances of curriculum set texts rather than new writing.

In the view of the speakers, the purpose of outreach programmes was to find and develop talent. The theatre was not, however, a part of life experience for many young people in the same way as live music performances. Outreach aimed to develop connections between young people in different communities and the Royal Court and to give them an experience of all aspects of the theatre such as marketing, fundraising and design. The Royal Court made available free tickets to performances at the theatre mainly by developing shows locally.

John Tiffany noted that his career path would no longer be open to young people as he benefitted from free music lessons and free university. He criticised what he perceived as a failure to celebrate arts in the same way as STEM subjects. Noting that Art History and Classics were no longer taught in state schools, he argued that arts subjects should be available to young people. He also felt that there was a “poverty of ambition” in the UK as parents discourage children from attempting to get work in theatre.

Noting funding cuts that had affected the arts and local government, he acknowledged that it was difficult to argue that the theatre should have priority over the NHS. He suggested that Government policy could focus on theatre and creativity in education.