

PRESS RELEASE

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**Federation calls for radical action on education to boost
social mobility and the economy**

The Creative Industries Federation today warns that the Government's ambitions for the young people of Britain cannot be achieved without a radical shift in policy on school education and training.

It calls for the Government to drop plans to make 90 per cent of students study the traditional core curriculum called the EBacc.

It further demands a proper audit of the education and training the UK needs for a prosperous future as part of the Government's new industrial strategy.

A Federation education paper published today shows how the current focus on the EBacc - alongside plans for apprenticeships - are limiting the life chances of the next generation and will not achieve the Prime Minister's ambitions for greater social mobility.

The paper, *Social Mobility and the Skills Gap - Creative Education Agenda 2016*, also highlights how current policies threaten the UK's standing as a global creative power by failing to produce enough young people with the mix of creative and technical skills needed.

The EBacc, which includes no creative subjects, is encouraging a dramatic decline in the take-up of them. There are further concerns about the Government's new apprenticeship levy which risks undermining current training in the sector without tackling existing skills shortages.

The skills shortages are set to be exacerbated by Brexit, as the UK loses ready access to skilled workers who have been plugging some of the gaps. Around 6.1 per cent of the creative industries workforce are non-UK Europeans.

John Kampfner, chief executive of the Creative Industries Federation, said: "We are failing to produce enough young people with the technical and creative skills needed to fill some of the most exciting careers in the fastest growing sector of the economy. That is economic madness.

“And current education policies will not deliver the social mobility the Government wants. To create genuine opportunities for all, we need to make sure we give every young person, and not just those at the best schools, the chance to study subjects that prepare them for those jobs.”

Sir John Sorrell, the designer, UK business ambassador and Federation founder and chair, said: "If problems in education are not addressed and we fail to encourage our creative talent, we will lose our position as a world leader. This is a particular challenge now when Brexit will cut ready access to the wider European workforce."

Notes to editors:

Speaking at Conservative party conference on Wednesday October 5, 2016, Prime Minister Theresa May said they would identify sectors of the economy – including the creative industries alongside financial services, life sciences, tech, aerospace and car manufacturing – that were of “strategic importance to our economy” and promised to “do everything we can to encourage, develop and support them”.

She said: [Education Secretary] Justine Greening and I have set out a new package of reforms, building on Michael Gove’s success, to increase the number of good school places across the country... so there’s not just a school place for every child, but a good school place for every child. A school place that suits the skills, interests and abilities of every single pupil."

The Government announced plans to develop an industrial strategy when it announced a shake-up of departmental responsibilities in July.

The Federation is the UK-wide membership body for all the arts, creative industries and cultural education which launched in January 2015. Its first policy document was Creative Education Agenda which in May 2015 explained why the Government should support creative learning.

The creative industries are worth £87.4bn GVA to Britain with the creative economy accounting for one in 11 jobs. It has been the fastest growing sector of the UK economy since the 2008 crash.