Using feedback and collaborative human-centred co-design with students and industry as a means of improving outcomes and impact in employability within the Creative Economy.
Co-design as a Pedagogical Tool

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(formerly Creative Professions and Digital Arts, CPDA)

• Film and TV Production (BA)
• Digital Film Production (BSc)
Digital Enterprise and the Creative Economy (MEDS1164)
Understanding Business as an Employability Factor

Phil Dolling
Head of Features BBC TV

"It's great that graduates come out knowing how to produce and create films but really at that level we just wish they understood the business side of things better. That's more useful for us. Entry level jobs are support roles in TV"
Content

• Basic principles of business and commerce
• The creative economy
• Start-up culture and business innovation
• Business finances, legal reporting requirements
• Framed within the context of digital media entertainment/apps
• Specifically NOT framed within typical film/tv production business*

*Because this is covered in the final year
NESTA Toolkit

• Four handbooks to help shape creative ideas into a business
• Activity worksheets for to explore and visualise the key issues of the business
• Case studies of successful creative entrepreneurs who have used the Creative Enterprise
Student Response

- Unitu
- A small group of students spoke to their year group tutor
- Class representatives issued a survey
- Individual emails
- Moodle FAQ forum
- Evasys
...it feels like grasping at straws to make it relevant to the course.

...many of us are still struggling and dislike the course structure.

Most recently, myself and a majority of my classmates, digital enterprise and creative economy were sent to Smashfest, a play and leisure activity aimed to ignite the communities and young children to take an interest to science and the environment.

This was to replace our lecture and seminar which we usually have on a Thursday. Many of us are still struggling and dislike the course structure already (which fair enough can be put down to opinion) But the Smashfest event was not relevant or helpful at all. As well as the topics being about science, contrasting to Arts and technologies the content was for a far younger audience.

In addition to that we are given to think about is that: “This should stimulate your thinking about your group’s own business planning and ideas.” It feels like grasping at straws to make it relevant to the course and the fact it was aimed at young audiences would not help at all, if our business ideas are aimed at older independent audiences.

I mean no disrespect to the persons involved personally, but I do not think the course was not suitable and the course leaders could take more care with the content and limited time of our lessons.

We know it was important that the center needed more people as an audience but setting it as our lesson did feel insulting and would not reach the original objective anyway of encouraging young people into science. Overall I think if the course leaders could give more explanation that would be better, Thank you.
Discussion

Year 3, BSc Film and Television Production

What would have been more logical is if the course was somehow tied to our Production Practices course. The Digital Economy course is about making money and running a film like a business, so why not have us run our productions that we're currently doing as businesses.

Once again there seems to be a lack of planning and forethought.

Anonymous Commenter #1 - 18/02/2018 at 18:08

Yup, totally irrelevant nonsense.

Anonymous Commenter #2 - 19/02/2018 at 14:48

It was totally irrelevant to our course and to what we are studying in general.
Feedback survey (via class reps)

• Pointless course. I came to study Film and I am told countless times how the business is important. If I wanted business related course would have applied for one in the first place.
• I literally have no interest in this course which I deem to be useless and contains no real relevance to the course itself.
• It’s rubbish and irrelevant
• I want a refund for my degree because of this course.
• I like the idea of learning about the business. BUT MEDIA AND FILM BISINESS.[sic]
Digging down – specific claims.....
Students as clients

As the HE system continues to create the affordable for students to assume a 'customer' mindset, it is ever more critical to empower them to take ownership of their learning and embrace an active, co-creation mindset.
Design thinking in HE

“The authors’ overarching goal is to identify the features and characteristics of design thinking and discuss its importance in promoting students’ problem-solving skills in the 21st century.”

What is design thinking and why is it important?
Rim Razzouk, Valerie Shute
Designing services for “clients”
Design thinking for course (re)design

What is?
(current reality)

What if?
(ideation)

What wows?
(choices)

What works?
(new course)

What’s next?
(new current reality)

Unitu
Class surveys
Brainstorm
Co-design workshops
Draft course changes (rapid prototype)
Peer discussion
Prototype and test

Go to beginning and start again

TIME
Design Thinking steps

- **Empathise**
  - Talked in class
  - Used feedback forms

- **Define**
  - Class survey and evasys
  - Co-design workshop

- **Ideate**
  - Brainstorm ideas
  - Developed new course

- **Prototype**
  - Dropped lecture + seminar
  - 2 hour seminar (smaller groups)
  - Academic peer review

- **Test**
  - MEDS1164 2018-19
  - Constant feedback
  - Constant iteration
Results

3.3) Feedback has helped me develop and improve my performance.

- Agree strongly: 0%, 44.4%, 25%, 8.3%, 22.2%
- Disagree strongly: n=36, av.=2.9, dev.=1.2

3.4) Feedback on my work (informal or formal) has been timely (normally within 15 working days).

- Agree strongly: 14.3%, 51.4%, 22.9%, 0%, 11.4%
- Disagree strongly: n=35, av.=3.6, dev.=1.1

- Second term was a lot better than the first as more things made sense.
- The Lecturers
  - The professors are amazing
  - The teachers have a good way of giving out the information needed even though majority of the class is not interested.

- The first term was great. I was interested and very happy with the course. However I feel like the quality has just gone down in term two.
Conclusions

Iterative, feedback-based human centred design in future course development is a way to empower, satisfy and better motivate, and thus better educate, our students.

Design thinking (in particular participatory co-design with students) could be adopted across a range of HE processes, including course and assessment design but requires a framework which allows for constant iteration.