

# Review of Mentoring and Work Placement Opportunities for Students and Graduates of the University of the Arts, London

Learning and Teaching Development Department  
May 2007

# Contents

3	Introduction
4	Special Projects
16	Postgraduate and Undergraduate Courses
24	Individual Colleges
27	Conclusion
28	Recommendations

# Introduction

This report has been commissioned by the Learning and Teaching Development department (Shân Wareing Dean) to identify existing mentoring activities and work placement opportunities at UAL. The report aims to highlight existing good practice that should be supported and possibly extended across UAL, and to identify gaps in existing provision where resources could help improve the student experience.

This report comes under the remit of the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund. Its purpose is to enhance the student experience, improve student employability and increase the culture of ‘service’ both within the university and from the university to the community.

The report looks at three main areas of the university where mentoring and work placements take place; **special projects**, i.e. university initiatives that lie outside teaching, **undergraduate and postgraduate courses**, and **individual colleges**.

In this report mentoring includes activities where students are mentored by industry professionals, UAL graduates, peers and other year groups. Schemes whereby students are mentors are also included. Work placements can range from working in the community, working in industry, organising events and exhibitions, and can last a few days, weeks or an academic year.

Although these definitions have been specified, this report also intends to assess how mentoring and work placements are defined by different units across the university, and so has aimed to be open and inclusive in its research.

Research methods have been two-fold; for the special projects and individual colleges, which needed an in-depth approach due to their complexity, face-to-face interviews were held with an appropriate member of staff. For the activity within undergraduate and postgraduate courses, which needed a simple and quick approach due to the number of courses, an email was sent to all course directors/leaders across UAL asking a number of questions about mentoring and work placement opportunities within their courses. Hence the documentation of these activities varies in length and detail.

The report aims to present an accurate account of current activity, however it does not presume to be definitive as some activity may not have come to light, especially within courses due to non response to the email.

## Mentoring and work placement opportunities within Special Projects across the University of the Arts, London

- Alumni Association; UAL
- Artquest; UAL
- Young Design Programme; UAL
- Student Services; UAL
- Students' Union; UAL
- The Design Laboratory; CSM
- Enterprise Centre for the Creative Arts; LCC
- Skills Set Screen Academy; LCC
- Fashion Business Recourse Studio; LCF
- The Engine Room; Wimbledon

# Alumni Association

*University of the Arts, London*

Bex Singleton / Assistant Administration Officer, Alumni Officer (Programmes)

## **Mentoring – in development**

Bex Singleton has been conducting research in order to set up a mentoring scheme for UAL alumni. The proposal is for the Alumni Association to collate an online database of mentor profiles from different creative disciplines. Potential mentors would go through an application and vetting process in order to be profiled. Recent graduates would then select a mentor and apply to them via the Alumni Association.

The pair would have responsibility for how the mentor relationship is managed, and it is envisaged that the association would not officially monitor the relationship but may get pairs to feedback throughout.

## *Comment*

It was felt that it would be useful for the UAL to have a single comprehensive mentoring handbook for both mentors and mentees, giving advice covering how to manage the relationship, legal issues, safety, etc.

# Artquest

*University of the Arts, London*

Stephen Beddoe / Director

Artquest is based at UAL and is funded by the Arts Council of England as one of their regularly funded organisations (RFO). Their remit is to provide advice and support for visual artists and craftspeople in London. Their schemes are not available to students, but can be used by graduates. They have been running since 2001.

## **Website ([www.artquest.org.uk](http://www.artquest.org.uk))**

Artquest run a comprehensive on-line recourse providing practical information on issues including selling and exhibiting work, art-law, being self-employed, etc, as well as advertising work opportunities.

## **Helpline**

An email and phone service is available for enquiries relating to artistic practice.

## **Networking and training events**

Training events, seminars and networking sessions are held throughout the year, places are limited and sometimes charged for.

## **One-to-One**

Artquest run one-to-one sessions for visual artists and craftspeople. Applicants must complete an application form outlining how they see their future career developing, to be considered for a place. About 1 in 10 applicants are successful.

Successful applicants receive a one-hour session with an advisor to discuss their practice and career. The attending practitioner sets the agenda and areas covered can include marketing, employment, freelancing, funding and creative practice. The sessions are one off and not generally followed up. Testimonials from previous recipients of the advice sessions are available online.

## **Forum**

Artquest invites proposals once a year from established artists and craftspeople to set up a peer mentoring / networking group. A lead artist proposes 12 other artists they would like to involve in the group. Artquest selects 3 lead artists and assists in assembling the groups. The groups meet six times between September and March, and sessions are organised by the lead artist.

The networks are intended to provide an environment to engage in constructive, rigorous and critical discussion on artistic practice with peers. Artquest staff observe some of the sessions, although they do not monitor the whole process.

# Young Design Programme

*University of the Arts, London*

Ian Thompson / Programme Manager

The Young Design Programme (YDP) was created by the Sorrell Foundation, which aims to inspire creativity in young people and to improve quality of life through design.

The programme is an extension of the joinedupdesign for schools initiative, which places pupils in the role of clients and enables them to create a brief for an identified design project that will improve the quality of life in their school. Pupils commission a professional designer to work with them to develop the design concept and solution. The scheme ran for 6 years and worked with 700 pupils in 100 schools.

YDP extends joinedupdesign for schools to include students from design related courses across UAL. The pupils remained the clients, but UAL students became the commissioned designers, and the industry professionals the mentors of the students.

Students for YDP are selected by application and interview from different disciplines across the university including graphic design, spatial and interior design, information design, advertising, illustration, media practice, photojournalism, artefact, and architecture. Between 30 and 40 students are selected each year to work in 10 London schools. Once selected, they are formed into teams of mixed disciplines, with up to six students in each team. Each student design team is introduced to their pupil clients at an event at Chelsea School of Art, at which the pupils are asked to identify the challenge they wished to set to their student design consultants. The pupils then develop a brief and, together, over the course of an academic year, the pupil clients and student designers carry out research and visits. The design students respond to their pupil client teams by preparing and presenting a design concept.

Each student team is assigned an industry mentor with whom they have 3 mentoring sessions throughout the project. These sessions include advice on the project as well as addressing wider professional practice issues that might arise.

For students that take part, the scheme is now a credited part of their course during their 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

As a result of the scheme students gain valuable experience that contributes towards their professional development, and learn the importance of planning, co-operation, listening to the client, and making informed decisions. As one student said: “I have greater confidence as a designer and my communication skills and people skills have greatly improved”.

# Student Services

*University of the Arts, London*

Julia Yates / Assistant Director of Student Services & Head of Creative Careers

## **Connect Mentoring**

N.B. This scheme was put on hold at the end of academic year 05/06, pending review of mentoring across UAL.

Connect Mentoring offered career mentoring under two strands: **Inter Connect** for black and minority ethnic students and **Connect Able** for students with disabilities. Each year it paired twenty 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students from courses across UAL with industry professionals appropriate to each student's area of study.

The scheme aimed to provide students with support and career advice specific to their area of study.

Course leaders were asked to put forward students who might benefit from the scheme and who fitted either of the two strands of the scheme. Students then applied.

Student Services were responsible for finding appropriate mentors, who were given training before the relationships begun. An initial meeting was held for all mentors and students, and then the pairs had a recommended minimum of four one-to-one sessions over the proceeding five-month period.

Student Services also provided several networking and training events for students throughout the mentor period. There was no formal framework for monitoring the relationships, but mentors and mentees were encouraged to report problems.

### *Comments*

It was noted by Student Services that there was difficulties in recruiting students for the scheme. This was possibly due to the nature of student life and concentrating on studies rather than future careers.

It was felt that too few students benefited compared to the funding and staff time needed to run the scheme.

## **Creative Careers**

Creative Careers offers careers advice to current students and graduates up to two years after graduation through the following:

- A website that lists job vacancies and work placement opportunities (and advice on securing voluntary work, procedures, rights, etc)
- One-to-one advice sessions on career options, marketing, self-employment, etc
- CV workshops – online or in person
- Leaflets on professional practice issues for specific career disciplines
- E-guidance; an email helpline service for long distance graduates

# Students' Union

*University of the Arts, London*

Duncan Mann / Membership Services Manager

Laura Knight / Buddying Co-ordinator

The Students' Union mentoring activities are specifically geared towards supporting students through the "student experience" in a **social capacity** rather than an academic one.

## **Buddying**

Set up in 2006 the Buddying scheme matches new international students, especially those who have just moved to the UK, with current UAL students. The Buddies offer support to new students in the form of advice about living in London, studying at UAL and general issues that arise.

In 2006-07 there were 24 student Buddies offering Buddying to 50 new international students.

Buddies were recruited via an advert on the SU website and via email and asked to apply using an application form (the recruitment process is being reviewed for next year). The appointed Buddies were given a days training. New students seeking a Buddy are asked to apply via the SU website and information is also provide via the International Office.

The Buddies have regular meetings with new students and are asked to be available through phone and email contact. The Buddying coordinator supports the buddies and has feedback meetings every 3 weeks.

## **Volunteering (in development)**

The Students' Union is currently setting up a volunteering programme and has just recruited a Volunteering Coordinator. This is partly to replace the former volunteering scheme Volunteering in the Arts London (VITAL), the volunteering scheme for staff and students at the University of the Arts London, which has now come to an end.

The proposal is that student volunteers will lead the scheme with support from SU staff. The focus will be on involving students in community-based activities and linking with community organisations that need volunteers.

# The Design Laboratory

*Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design*

Brent Richards / Director

Central Saint Martins established the Design Laboratory as a creative bridge between education and the commercial agenda of industry, consultancy and business. It is a design studio housed in the busy and vibrant atmosphere of the Innovation Centre at Central Saint Martins.

## **Internship Scheme**

Until 2006 the Design Laboratory ran trainee internships for recent CSM graduates, drawing on some of the most able and multi-talented of recent graduates from UAL courses at all levels.

The graduates were employed as part of a creative team of designers in a managed, project-orientated, studio environment. They worked on commercial briefs with real deadlines, real fees and a wide range of clients with whom to negotiate and inspire.

The scheme aimed to fast track graduates into a professional career through a phased internship; first as interns, then designers, then project managers. All posts were paid. The first phase lasted three months, when interns presented to the Design Lab team. Depending on this and their previous performance they were engaged for a further 12 months. The full scheme came to an end as the costs were too high and the working processes too inefficient to meet client needs. It has been replaced with a series of 3 to 6 month internships, which do not necessarily lead to longer employment but are still paid.

## **Embryo – in development**

As an alternative to their internship scheme, the Design Lab are currently developing a coaching and mentor scheme for MA graduates from across UAL. It is intended that the scheme will be part of the academic programme for a one-year pilot phase to be continued pending further funding.

The scheme will run for three months, one during Spring 2008 and one in Summer 2008. It will cater for 25-30 graduates from any discipline, who will apply for the scheme and pay a fee.

Embryo aims to develop graduates' professional abilities, and their awareness of the current challenges facing the design world through mentoring by industry professionals.

The Design Lab hopes that from the scheme they will be able to employ creatives who have a well-rounded professional understanding.

# Enterprise Centre for the Creative Arts (ECCA)

*London College of Communication*

Alison Coward / ECCA Central Lead Officer

ECCA provides guidance and support to students and graduates of the University of the Arts London who wish to become, or are self-employed.

## **One-to-One advice sessions**

Students or graduates of UAL can book one-to-one sessions with a number of advisers from different creative and business backgrounds, who offer advice including funding, publicity and marketing, accounting, tax, starting up and running a business, websites, copyright, business plans, etc.

For UAL graduates, the first three sessions are free of charge; further sessions are charged at £25. It is felt that charging for some of the sessions is important to encourage new businesses to factor in training and continuing professional development into their budgets.

## **Website**

The ECCA website offers further information on events, courses and training for creative businesses, as well as a directory of other organisations that offer guidance and advice. It also contains downloadable resources, including pod casts and fact sheets on starting out, marketing, finance, etc.

## **Talks/Events**

ECCA staff visit courses across the UAL to give talks on how students can access support and information on careers and professional practice. They highlight the opportunities of self-employment as a career option.

Events are also organised on enterprise, starting up businesses, business development, etc.

## **Work Placements/mentoring programme – In Development**

ECCA intends to set up a work placement scheme whereby newly established businesses receive mentoring and support from a graduate of UAL that have set up their own business.

## *Comments*

ECCA would like to see tutors given training in best practice for the delivery of enterprise and professional practice.

# Skill Set Screen Academy

*London College of Communication*

Rob Buckler / Director

LCC is joint host to the 7th Skill Set Screen Academy, which it runs jointly with Ealing Institute of Media (EIM). Skill Set Film, a branch of the Film Council, funds the academy. It aims to close the gap between academic studies and film industry practice by developing new courses, master classes and online learning resources, providing work placements for students, setting up a talent scout programme and offering film industry mentoring for student productions.

## **Weekly Surgeries**

An industry film producer is available once a week for 3<sup>rd</sup> year students to book an appointment with for production advice on final projects.

## **Mentoring**

Students about to graduate are linked with industry mentors relevant to their area of study. This scheme is currently run on an ad-hoc basis and intends to be formally set up.

## **First Break – In development**

SSSA intends to set-up a seminar series given by recent graduates who will talk about their experience of making it in the film industry and give advice on how to get your first break.

## **35 mm film at Ealing Studios – work experience**

Students from LCC and EIM will be brought together to work on a 35mm film to be shot at Ealing Studios. Students will each bring different skills to the project from production, direction, set building, etc.

# Fashion Business Resource Studio

*London College of Fashion*

Ursula Hudson / Director

FBRS acts as an interface between LCF and the fashion and lifestyle industries and aims to improve the integration of LCF's students, graduates and staff into the industry, support and develop the industry and establish networks.

## **Work Placements**

FBRS organises year long placements that are an optional element, carried out in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the following courses: BA (Hons) Fashion Design and Development, BA (Hons) Cordwainers Footwear, BA (Hons) Cordwainers Accessories, BA (Hons) Fashion Management, BSc (Hons) Cosmetic Science.

At the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year the FBRS placements officer gives workshops to students interested in doing a placement, on writing their CV's, how to do a company search, interview techniques, etc. Industry professionals are also brought in to talk about the realities of working in the industry. The aim of the workshops is to illustrate why the work placement is an important and integral part of studying.

The placement officer also has a one-to-one tutorial with all the students wanting to do a placement to look at their CV's and define the industry area they are interested in.

Students then conduct a company search to define the company they want to work for and contact the company to enquire about a work placement opportunity. The placements officer will also send out students CVs to appropriate companies if the student is having difficulty securing the placement.

A contract is made between LCF and the company to ensure they have liability for the student and that they comply with health and safety regulations.

Each student is assigned an academic member of staff as a placements tutor, who makes two visits to the placement during the year to ensure it is suitable and all parties are happy.

BA Fashion Design Technology students also undertake a compulsory 10-week work placement in their 2<sup>nd</sup> year. This is also organised through the FBRS.

FBRS also gives workshops to the other LCF courses on CV's, interview techniques, etc.

## **Fashion Aim**

Fashion Aim is a website ([www.fashionaim.org](http://www.fashionaim.org)) run by the FBRS, which aims to further their mission in linking LCF graduates and alumni with career opportunities in the fashion and lifestyle industries.

The website allows LCF graduates to upload a personal profile and images of their work. Industry professionals can then search the database for potential employees, matching search criteria with their specific needs.

It is intended that the site will develop into an online fashion community for industry professionals and recent graduates. It is also hoped that the site will facilitate peer-to-peer mentoring and networking relationships between graduates.

# The Engine Room

*Wimbledon College of Art*

Hayley Skipper / Projects Co-ordinator

The Engine Room, Directed by Prof. Anne Bamford, is a centre for the development and promotion of projects to bring enterprise, research and community together around arts-based activities to build sustainable systems of knowledge transfer about the impact of the arts within society.

The Engine Room undertakes research, impact measurement, evaluation, community projects, consultancies, education services, professional development, events, performances and exhibitions.

## **Mentoring – In Development**

The Engine Room is currently developing a mentoring scheme, which is anticipated would be likely to launch during the 2008 academic year.

The scheme would be aimed at graduates, 1 year or more after finishing a BA or MA. Current thinking is that the scheme may focus on Wimbledon students, but this may be extended more broadly as The Engine Room develops within the 3-College Model.

It is intended that industry professionals and art consultants would be appointed as mentors, and would be paired with graduates for a mentoring relationship that would last for 1 year. A mixture of creative and professional advice would be provided.

## **Creative Professional**

Mentoring would sit within the Engine Room's 'Creative Professional' strand, which aims to highlight the social and economic contribution made by artists. Creative Professional also initiates industry and community based projects, on which current students carry out work placements.

# Mentoring and work placement opportunities within Undergraduate and Postgraduate courses across the University of the Arts, London

All Course Directors/Leaders (referred to differently at different colleges) were asked to provide information regarding activities within their specific courses in the following categories:

**Peer-to-peer mentoring**

**Industry mentors**

**Graduates mentoring/advising current students**

**Students mentoring other year groups**

**Work placement opportunities/volunteering**

**Other relevant activity**

The following course information does not intend to be exhaustive, as some courses may not have responded.

- BA Acting (and associated MA courses); CSM
- BA Directing; CSM
- BA Fashion; CSM
- BA Fine Art; CSM
- BA Graphic Design; CSM
- BA Theatre: Design for Performance; CSM
- Post Grad Diploma in Character Animation; CSM
- MA Creative Practice for Narrative Environments; CSM
- BA/MA Fine Art; Chelsea
- PG Diploma Broadcast Journalism; LCC
- MA Enterprise & Management for the Creative Arts; LCC
- BA Graphic Design; LCC
- FDA Travel and Tourism; LCC
- BA Fashion Design Technology; LCF
- BA Fine Art; Wimbledon

# BA Acting (and associated MA courses)

*Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design /Drama Centre*  
Anne Walsh

## **Industry Mentors**

A mentoring scheme is offered to students approaching their finals. Around 60 students per year across the courses are paired with a mentor who helps students through their 3<sup>rd</sup> year and to bridge the move from education to industry. Mentors are industry professionals and usually graduates from the Drama Centre. They are matched by specialism or area of interest and they explain the realities of the profession, introduce students to agents, casting directors and other professional contacts, offer advice on auditions and presentation techniques and form a useful support network.

There is no formal training for mentors, but this is an area currently being developed.

# BA Directing

*Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design /Drama Centre*  
Di Trevis / Course Director

## **Work Placement opportunities**

In the latter stages of the course two placements in a variety of industry settings are carried out. Placements are with theatre and television companies during which artistic work and technical production, management, marketing and outreach are observed.

# BA Fashion

*Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design*  
Willie Walters / Course Director

## **Graduates mentoring/advising current students**

During the summer term each BAF Pathway invites graduates to talk about their experiences to both final and 2nd year students. In the past there has also been workshops with graduate mentors.

## **Students mentioning other year groups**

A mentoring scheme was piloted this year. 1st year students are paired up with a mentor from either the 2nd or final year.

## **Work placement opportunities**

The work placement program has been established since the 1970s. It is assessed as the "Diploma in Professional Practise".

## BA Fine Art

*Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design*  
Jane Lee / Course Director

### **Work placement opportunities**

In the final term of the first year all students are required to participate in a project outside the college environment. Projects can range from working in an artist's studio, organising an exhibition or community project. Projects are proposed and initiated by students to extend the parameters of their practice.

## BA Graphic Design

*Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design*  
Alan Baines / Course Leader

### **Students mentoring other year groups**

Stage 3 students mentor Stage 1

### **Industry mentors**

Industry mentors are involved via live projects, e.g. LVMH, Illy Coffee, MTV, etc.

### **Work placement opportunities**

Work placements are optional and organised via current VT and AL tutors, who are professional designers with their own companies or via alumni.

## BA Theatre: Design for Performance

*Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design*  
Michael Spencer / Course leader

### **Peer-to-Peer Mentoring**

Peer assessment occurs throughout all 3 stages on the course.

### **Graduates mentoring/advising current students**

Graduates are employed to deliver Unit 11 (Summer '07) and to deliver folio reviews. There is also a graduate evening for Stage 1 & 2 students to talk and ask questions etc.

### **Students mentoring other year groups**

- This is about to be formally part of the revalidated course 07/08 and will be assessed as part of Unit 6 for Stage 2 students + options for peer-to-peer mentoring in Stage 3.

- Stage 1 students assist Stage 3 students on Cochrane Theatre Design for dance collaboration
- Stage 2 students assist Stage 3 students for degree show exhibition

### **Work Placement opportunities**

There is an option for self-initiated work experience/placement in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. International exchanges and internal collaborative opportunities are also available.

## **Post Grad Diploma in Character Animation**

*Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design*

Steve Roberts / Lecturer, Mentor coordinator

### **Industry Mentors**

In the first term of this one-year course, all students are paired with an industry mentor with whom they meet once a month for nine months. The mentors give portfolio feedback and professional advice.

Where possible student and mentor are paired according to interests and specialisms. The course has a list of mentors, many of who take on a mentee every year. Course alumni who are now successfully working in industry are also used as mentors.

The mentor coordinator contacts the mentors to check that the sessions are happening and successful, apart from that they are not monitored.

## **MA Creative Practice for Narrative Environments**

*Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design*

Patricia Austin / Course Leader

### **Industry mentors**

- 3<sup>rd</sup> year students are paired with an industry mentor appropriate to their interests.
- Industry affiliates also contribute to projects and attend crits and live projects.

### **Graduates mentoring/advising current students**

Graduates advise current students on career options, etc

### **Work placement opportunities**

2<sup>nd</sup> year students carry out a mandatory assessed work placement in the industry

## BA/MA Fine Art

*Chelsea College of Art and Design*

Mo Throp / Course Leader

### **Students mentoring other year groups**

- Chelsea PhD students give presentations to BA/MA students on their research.
- 3rd year BA students are allocated a 1st year 'Buddy' at the end of the spring term, to help with organising their degree shows.
- Royal College of Art MA fine art students give presentations of their work to students and one-to-one tutorials.

### **Graduates mentoring/advising current students**

Past students regularly give talks about their practice/career since they've left college.

### **Other**

A 'shadowing' scheme allows PhD and MA Fine Art students to shadow staff. They are given a full briefing (with written guidelines).

## PG Diploma Broadcast Journalism

*London College of Communication*

Martin Shaw / Course Leader

### **Industry mentors**

Sponsored students (by the BBC, ITV, GCap, Bloomberg) all have a mentor from their sponsor company.

Other students arrange informal contacts with editors in the industry.

8 News editors visit the course during second term to give advice and feedback during 'live newscasts'

### **Graduates mentoring/advising current students**

Graduates are invited back every year to discuss their progress with the current group

### **Work placement opportunities**

Every student does an assessed 3-week work placement in industry

# MA Enterprise & Management for the Creative Arts

*London College of Communication*

Liz Lydiat

## **Peer to peer mentoring**

This occurs within group work on the XMA residential and in the Enterprise and Financial Management in Cultural Production unit. Students also undertake peer mentoring on a voluntary and self-initiated basis.

## **Industry mentors**

Industry mentors are used as external supervisors for the final major project. This will reduce considerably this year because of the increase in student numbers. It will, however, continue as mechanism to support the most advanced and interesting research topics.

## **Graduates mentoring/advising current students**

Graduates return to give lectures about their careers post-EMCA, and their current research as part of curriculum delivery.

## **Students mentoring other year groups**

This used to happen but has ceased due to logistical difficulties with increased numbers.

## **Work placement opportunities**

There are two work-related learning opportunities within the validated programme: Management of Creativity requires an external management case study for assessment, and Unit 2.4 includes a work-related learning elective.

# BA Graphic Design (all pathways)

*London College of Communication*

Sarah Temple / PPD Coordinator

## **Placement Year**

Approximately 50 students per year, across the BA Graphic Design options at LCC, have a year in industry during their 3rd year. Students are encouraged to do several placements during the year in different companies, types of industry and in different countries. This approach gives students a more rounded picture of the design industry and helps them to focus their interests. Students write a report to compare the different institutions they have worked for.

The School of Graphic Design has a comprehensive database of industry contacts to assist students in setting up their placements. Students write a proposal for their placement year and tutors assist in setting up placements. Tutors monitor students throughout the year.

**Industry Day**

The School of Graphic Design holds an annual industry day where companies showcase their work. Industry professionals also give talks and students can have one-to-one portfolios sessions.

**London Design Festival**

Each year the school produces a project for London Design festival, which often enables students to work with professionals. The 2007 project will pair illustration students with professional writers, to illustrate a series of children's books. Publishers Faber and Faber will provide editorial and design support, and offer mentoring to the students on the realities of the publishing world.

## FDA Travel and Tourism

*London College of Communication*

Michael Brett / Course Leader

**Work placement opportunities**

The course includes assessed Work Based Learning for a period of six to eight weeks in the travel and tourism industry.

**Students mentioning other year groups**

Previously second year students have volunteered to mentor first year students, however, this year there were no volunteers due to timetabling clashes.

## BA Fashion Design Technology

*London College of Fashion*

Alan Cannon-Jones / Course Leader

**Industry mentors**

2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years are allocated an industry mentor

**Work placement opportunities**

There is a 10 week compulsory work placement in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year (see FBRS in Special Projects for further details)

# BA Fine Art (all pathways)

*Wimbledon College of Art*

Tamiko O'Brien / Lecturer

## **Work Placements**

All BA fine art students at Wimbledon carry out a work placement in their 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Placements must be a minimum of 10 days and could be work within a school, a gallery, initiating an exhibition, etc. Students are given a series of talks on how to carry out the work placements before hand. Several students work with the Engine Room at Wimbledon (see Special Projects) on their community focused research projects.

## Mentoring and work placement opportunities within individual colleges across the University of the Arts, London

- Camberwell
- London College of Communication

# Camberwell

James Pearson / Electives Programme Coordinator

## **Placement Year**

All Camberwell's Undergraduate students have the opportunity, in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year, to elect to carry out a work placement or live project instead of writing a dissertation or doing a studio project. Currently 145 students per year elect to do a work placement or live project, and this number increases each year.

The work placement is self-initiated so that students get used to driving a professional project themselves. Students select a company to do their placement and the course leader assists them in securing it. Live projects are more entrepreneurial, e.g. developing a product, putting on an exhibition, etc.

The placement must be a minimum of five weeks, and the employer writes a report on the student at the end.

The placement allows the students to gain an insight, and prepare for life after their studies.

It is possible this scheme could be rolled out across Chelsea and Wimbledon.

## *Comments*

It is becoming harder to run the electives scheme due to more procedures in risk assessment, health and safety and insurance becoming more rigorous.

# London College of Communication

Daphne Hampton / Senior Lecturer and Mentoring Coordinator

## **Peer-to-peer Mentoring**

The mentoring scheme at LCC has been run by Daphne Hampton since 1999, and facilitates peer-to-peer mentoring by 2nd year students to 1st year students. The focus of the mentoring is primarily academic; mentors can give advice on essay writing, how to handle course work, which lectures to go to, who to go to for further advice, etc.

The scheme identifies students who are “at risk” and in need of extra support. Each year around 7 courses participate in the scheme and around 6 students from each course are selected as mentees. The involvement of courses is dependent on whether they have students who would benefit from the scheme. Course teams identify potential mentees, therefore it is essential that the course leaders and teams are involved with and supportive of the scheme.

Mentors are provided with thorough training from Daphne Hampton and are supplied with a handbook, which includes advice on how to be a mentor, and tips such as to always meet in a public place. Mentors are paid £8 per hour, although it was noted that many mentors decline payment as they feel the experience is extremely useful to them in itself.

The pairs have 10 hours in which to meet over the year and after the initial meeting (facilitated by Daphne) they set the timing and agenda of the meetings. Daphne Hampton monitors the pairs throughout the year to ensure that they are meeting and if there are any problems that the mentors don't feel they can handle.

Daphne is currently developing a further mentoring scheme whereby 2nd years mentor groups of around 8 first year students, giving them advice on academic issues.

### *Comment*

Great care is taken in how the scheme is presented to prospective mentees, as they can potentially feel picked on or alienated when offered extra help. It is also stressed that this is an optional resource in which they don't have to participate.

The understanding and support of course leaders is vital to this scheme's success

Many mentees have said how helpful they find the scheme, and mentors have reported that the experience has benefited them academically and in other ways. Several mentees have become mentors due to finding the scheme rewarding.

# Conclusion

Mentoring and work placements are evidently a prolific and burgeoning area of activity within the University of the Arts London.

The current situation with special projects appears to be that several schemes; Connect Mentoring (Student Services), VITAL (UAL), Peer Mentoring (LCF) have recently come to an end due to terminated funding, restructuring, etc. It is also evident that there are several proposals for mentoring in the pipeline; Alumni Association (UAL) the Engine Room (Wimbledon), Fashion Aim (LCF) and the Students' Union voluntary scheme. This climate is an ideal time for the Learning and Teaching Development department to assess previous schemes and assist in the development of new ones.

From the responses received about courses there appears to be a rich variety of mentoring and work placement models, outstanding examples being Pgd in Character Animation (CSM), BA/MA Acting (CSM) and BA Graphic Design pathways (LCC). Schemes seem most successful when they are embedded in to the courses, as they are in these cases, rather than being an add-on.

Camberwell's work placement strategy provides students with the opportunity to shape their BA according to their strengths by giving them the choice of work placement, live project, studio project or dissertation.

LCC's long history of providing mentoring through Daphne Hampton's scheme has been successful in embedding mentoring across the college and gaining the vital support of course leaders across the college.

Problems within some of the mentoring schemes, particularly Connect Mentoring and Mentoring at LCC, which both cater for "at risk" students, seem to be encountered in the recruitment of students, particularly the issue of students feeling picked on or alienated when offered extra help.

The range of activity in both the areas of mentoring and work placements is extensive and defined in varying ways across the university. Mentoring in particular has very wide parameters including activities ranging from students presenting their work to one another, to students paired up with industry professionals. This range creates, on the one hand, a rich and diverse mix of opportunities for students, but on the other hand creates some lack of clarity over the university's position and strategy for mentoring.

Work placements are more defined, and only really differ in their length and setting. However, strains on these activities are often felt due to increasing numbers of students and pressure on staff time.

# Recommendations

1. A centralised support system for mentoring and work placement activity could be developed, and could include the following elements:
  - a. A university wide definition and policy for mentoring to be used by anyone at the university wanting to embark on a mentoring scheme. This report, or part of it, could be included to illustrate activity already taking place.
  - b. Comprehensive guidelines outlining best practice in mentoring and work placements (separately). This could be in the form of a handbook issued to potential mentors and mentees and companies taking on work placement students. This could include information such as legal issues, safety, insurance, responsibility, etc.  
LCC has developed a handbook for their mentoring scheme that could be adapted and built on, and FBRS (LCF) have developed a contract for their placement companies.
  - c. Training and advice for staff on running both mentoring and work placement schemes, including issues of management, resources, etc.  
Daphne Hampton (LCC) acts as a consultant on mentoring outside of the university, advising on setting up schemes. She has also had informal discussions with UAL staff regarding mentoring and would be interested in developing this more formally.
  - d. A central place where any new mentoring activity can be reported and recorded (i.e. continually building this report) and therefore supported.
2. The problems of carrying out work placements with increasing student numbers could be further investigated and strategised.
3. It might be advisable to separate mentoring and work placements if further research is to be carried out. Joint investigations have been feasible for this level of report as there are many overlaps between the two areas, however, detailed analysis and policymaking may benefit from separating the two.
4. Further research could be carried out in discussion with key members of UAL staff currently involved in running mentoring and work placements, perhaps in the form of a discussion forum. Recommended staff for this would include those staff running the special projects and cross college activities.
5. Further research could also include a report detailing examples of good practice in mentor schemes external to UAL.