

Policy Review Series: Class in the Creative industries – Paper No.01

Getting in and getting on

Class, participation and job quality in the UK Creative Industries

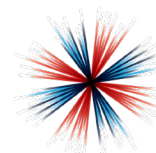
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Executive summary

A recent DCMS Select Committee inquiry into the impact of Covid-19 suggests that the pandemic poses 'the biggest threat to the UK's cultural infrastructure, institutions and workforce in a generation'. Safeguarding the sustainability of the sector and restoring its position as one of the UK economy's greatest success stories is a critical priority. But while current focus is on offering much needed aid to the sector and unlocking its potential to support the wider recovery, it is important too to consider how we can rebuild Creative Industries and creative occupations for the better – in a way that benefits more people and places across the UK.

Prior to the pandemic, there were growing concerns that the opportunities created in this vibrant part of the economy were 'out of reach' for many. This paper represents the first phase of the PEC's Policy Review Series on Class in the Creative Industries.

Echoing wider research, we find widespread and persistent class imbalances. Those from privileged backgrounds are more than twice as likely to land a job in a creative occupation. They dominate key creative roles in the sector, shaping what goes on stage, page and screen. They are also more likely to experience greater autonomy and control over their work, to have supervisory responsibility and to progress into managerial positions.

We also find that class interacts with other factors – such as gender, ethnicity, disability and skill levels – to create 'double disadvantage'. The intersection of class and skills has a particularly pronounced impact on the likelihood of landing a creative job, where those from a privileged background who are qualified to degree-level or above are 5.5 times as likely to secure a creative role than those of working-class background who are only skilled to GCSE-level.

Despite growing awareness of the issue and action by business, Government and industry stakeholders to promote greater inclusion, the likelihood of someone from a working-class background finding work in a creative occupation has remained largely unchanged since 2014 – the first point at which we are able to measure class origin using a robust and comparable method.

This raises the important question of how we can evolve and enhance the current approach so as to: shift the dial on diversity in a significant and sustained way; build a genuinely open and inclusive creative economy that creates opportunities for all; that maximises talent; and enables all workers to thrive, irrespective of their socio-economic background.

Key Words: class, Creative Industries, intersectionality, job quality, progression, social mobility, inequality, disadvantage

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the change we hope they will affect, are in no small part attributable to the skill and dedication of Frankie, who tragically passed away in June 2020. Our thoughts go to her family, friends, and colleagues.

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Introduction

Writing in July 2020, the Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport Committee suggested 'The Covid-19 crisis presents the biggest threat to the UK's cultural infrastructure, institutions and workforce in a generation. The loss of performing arts institutions, and the vital work they do in communities by spreading the health and education benefits of cultural engagement, would undermine the aims of the Government's 'levelling up' agenda and Arts Council England's next 10-year strategy, and reverse decades of progress in cultural provision and diversity and inclusion that we cannot afford to lose.' This stark assessment, delivered as part of an inquiry into the impact of Covid-19 on the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport's sectors, was one of many interventions making clear the potential crisis in cultural work (Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, 2020).

Although the DCMS Select Committee's focus was on cultural and artistic institutions, the rest of the Creative Industries have not escaped the impact of the pandemic. Yet the effects have not been evenly distributed. For some areas of Creative Industries, particularly those in control of digital modes of content provision, the advice to stay at home has seen rising engagement and associated revenues.

Whilst organisations and businesses have faced different challenges, creative workers have shared concerns about the post-Covid future of their industries. Pre-pandemic, the Creative Industries – from film and the wider screen industries to design, advertising and the digital economy – were an important success story for the UK economy (HM Government, 2018, DCMS, 2019).

This economic success, like the impact of the pandemic, was also not evenly distributed. Opportunities created in this growing part of the UK economy were 'out of reach' for many, and in almost all creative sectors and occupations the profile of the workforce looked dramatically different to the UK population.

Women, those from minority ethnic groups, and those from working-class backgrounds are significantly underrepresented in the Creative Industries (Giles et al, 2020; DCMS, 2019; Creative Industries Federation, 2014; Oakley et al, 2017; Create London, 2018). Even when minority groups are successful in 'getting in' to the industry, they face substantial barriers to 'getting on'. We see evidence of pay gaps and a lack of diverse talent in senior and key creative roles (see for example: Gill, 2014; Arts Council England, 2018; O'Brien et al, 2016; Harvey and Shepherd, 2016; Directors UK, 2018; Friedman et al, 2017).

The pandemic, as it disrupts cultural and creative production, delaying or discontinuing projects and investments, will see fewer opportunities and potentially fewer jobs. Just as with the impact of the 2008 financial crisis on the Creative Industries, we should expect those who are already marginalised to be worst hit (Creative Skillset 2009).

It is important we have a clear and accurate picture of the workforce to understand both the impact of the pandemic and to rebuild industries and occupations for the better. Despite increased awareness of these issues amongst government and industry, a recent evidence synthesis undertaken by the PEC points to significant gaps in what we know about the picture of diversity in the Creative Industries (Carey et al, 2019). In particular, the work highlighted a lack of regular and robust evidence assessing the representation of those with a disability and long-term health condition and those of working-class origin in the sector. The evidence review also suggests we lack in-depth insight which looks beyond participation, to explore the quality of work for those from disadvantaged backgrounds, their progression within the sector, the underlying barriers and constraints that underpin these trends, and ultimately 'what works' in overcoming these issues in order to promote greater diversity and inclusivity.

Considering these findings, the issue of class in the Creative Industries has been identified as a key theme for further research through a dedicated Policy Review series. This series will develop new insight on the participation and progression of those from working-class backgrounds; seek to better understand the effectiveness of the current policy approach; and identify new policy, programmes and practices that might prove successful in promoting greater inclusivity.

Class in the Creative Industries

This paper – the first in the Class in the Creative Industries Policy Review series – seeks to explore the participation, retention and progression of those of different class origin within the Creative Industries.

Class is a complex issue. The word is used in various ways by academics, the public, and by policymakers (see Roberts 2011 and Brook et al 2020 for a summary). For much of public discourse class is an expression of personal or community identity. In parts of the academic literature class is a category that describes positions within the social structure, most commonly within the labour market (e.g. Goldthorpe 2016). It is important to note that these two ways of understanding class are not at all exclusive and are interrelated in several ways. The technical, academic understandings of class permeate public debates; public and media discourses about class frame many academic research questions and projects (for example Savage 2015).

The Creative Industries provide a useful example to illustrate the complexity of class. Class does not have the same status as other individual characteristics that are protected under the 2010 Equality Act. Yet, there is policy and public concern about class within creative occupations, often framed within the broader agenda of social mobility (Jerwood 2019). Questions of class, of 'talent pipelines', debates over internships and pay, as well as access to key jobs in Creative Industries, reflect concerns over the class origins of who works in the creative sector (Brook et al 2020).

Organisations with responsibility for the industries and occupations constituting the sector have been working on the tricky problem of social class in Creative Industries for some time. OFCOM (2019), BBC (2018), BFI, ACE (Oman 2019), and UKIE (Taylor 2020) have either produced guidance, conducted research, suggested interventions, or collated data on the class composition of their relevant part of the creative workforce. At the same time, academics have sought to understand the class composition of Creative Industries and occupations (O'Brien et al 2016, Brook et al 2020). Research has also sought to explore how class sits alongside other demographic characteristics, such as gender and race, in shaping the creative workforce (O'Brien et al 2016).

Understanding the class composition of creative occupations is central to understanding social mobility in the sector. Research on class means we can identify levels of social mobility in the creative sector, and if creative occupations are different to other elite professions. These issues are core concerns for policymakers. As a result, this Policy Review seeks to fill some of these evidence gaps and address the following research questions:

1. To what extent are those from working-class backgrounds benefiting from the opportunities created within the Creative Industries, and sectors and occupations therein?
2. Do we observe differences in the types of roles and working patterns of those from working-class backgrounds – that is, indicators of the quality of work they are able to access in the sector?
3. How does retention and progression within the creative industries vary depending on an individual's social class?

Methodology and the measurement of class origins

The complicated nature of class has hindered research, public discourse, and policy interventions. The best proxies for understanding class, alongside the appropriate data collection tools and techniques, are also underdeveloped in the creative sector (Oman 2019, O'Brien 2020).

A core concern has been how best to capture information about class, particularly information that will be useful for thinking about social mobility into Creative Industries. For some researchers, social mobility can be understood by looking at household or parental incomes as children, to understand the relationship with income later in life. For others, the approach is to look at occupations, to understand the relationship between parental occupation and individual's occupations later in life (see Brook et al 2020 for a more detailed discussion).

Class origin information, as understood through this occupational approach, is not perfect. It is an inevitably partial picture of the rich and broad meaning that class has for individuals and communities. However, it is a very useful source of information for understanding the class composition of the creative workforce (O'Brien et al 2016, Oakley et al 2017). Moreover, in showing that class inequality sits alongside, and intersects with, inequalities of gender and race, academic work using the Office for National Statistics' Labour Force Survey has drawn further attention to longstanding problems of creative labour markets that policymakers are now keen to address (Brook et al 2020).

Our occupational definition of social class draws on the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC). NS-SEC clusters occupations together into eight groups, from I (higher managerial and professional, which includes doctors, CEOs and lawyers) to VII (routine occupations such as bar staff, care workers, and cleaners), while VIII is those who have never worked or who are long-term unemployed. We then collapse NS-SEC classes further into three classes:¹

- Those from 'privileged' backgrounds, who had at least one parent whose job was a higher or lower managerial, administrative or professional occupation (NS-SEC 1 or 2);
- Those from 'intermediate' origins, whose parents worked in intermediate, lower supervisory and technical occupations, or were self-employed (NS-SEC 3, 4 or 5);
- Those from 'working-class' backgrounds, whose parents were employed in routine or semi-routine occupations, or who were long-term unemployed (NS-SEC 6, 7 or 8).

Throughout the course of this paper, we explore the participation of those from different class origins in creative occupations – based on the DCMS definition which identifies 30 occupations across 9 clusters. Almost all occupations that constitute the Creative Industries are classified in the managerial and professional clusters of the NS-SEC. This means we can think of them as managerial and professional occupational destinations. To understand the class composition of the creative workforce we then need to understand the origins of those who end up in those destinations. In order to do this, we draw on survey information concerning the parental occupation when the respondent was aged 14. This information can then place an individual's class origin within the NS-SEC's list of occupations.

In particular, we have embarked on new analysis of the most recent Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Understanding Society (US) data which contain information about parental occupation, current occupation of employment and a host of other indicators concerning their job and working patterns; as well as subjective measures of autonomy, satisfaction and wellbeing.

The structure of this paper

Section 2 of this paper establishes an up to date picture of the class origin of those working in creative occupations.

Section 3 seeks to look beyond participation, to consider evidence of differences in job quality, advancement and progression; while Section 4 provides a 'primer' on the issue of intersectionality and the significance of class alongside other characteristics (gender, ethnicity, disability, skills) which subsequent research will seek to explore in greater depth.

Finally, Section 5 draws high-level conclusions about the participation, retention and advancement of those from working-class backgrounds in creative occupations; and introduces the outstanding questions raised by the research which will influence the wider work planned as part of the PEC's Policy Review Series on Class in the Creative Industries.

Further details on data sources and our methodology are included in Annex A of this paper.

1. We follow the approach adopted by Friedman and Laurison (2019)

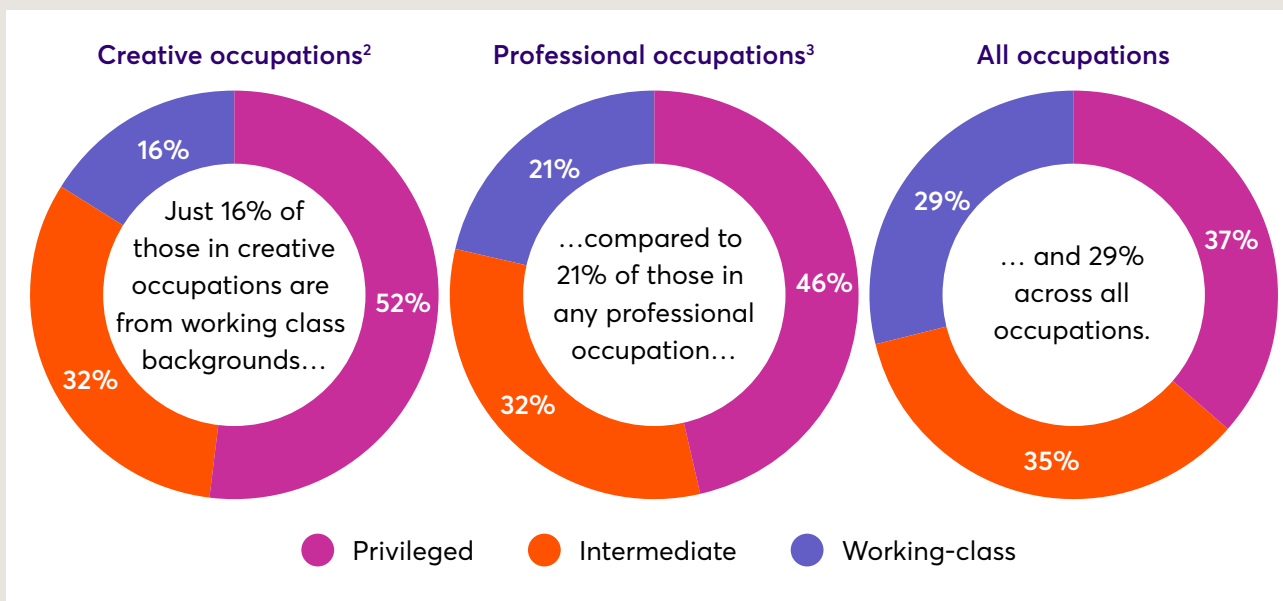
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Class origin and the Creative Industries

Earlier research suggests there is a persistent, systemic underrepresentation of those from working-class backgrounds in the sector (see for example, Create London 2018; O’Brien et al 2016; Eikhof and Warhurst 2013) and this is further evidenced by our analysis of recent data from the Labour Force Survey.

The majority (52 per cent) of those working in creative occupations in 2019 were from privileged backgrounds, compared with a little over one-third (37 per cent) of the total workforce. In contrast, just 16 per cent of employment in creative roles were from working-class backgrounds compared with 21 per cent of those in professional occupations and 29 per cent across all occupations (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Class origins of workers in creative, professional and all occupations, 2019



Source: Labour Force Survey, June – September 2019, ONS

- 2. All creative occupations, as outlined in Annex A. The vast majority of creative occupations are higher and lower professional and managerial (NS-SEC 1 and 2). If we look only at Professional and managerial creative occupations (NS-SEC 1 and 2) the percentage that are of working-class origin changes minimally, from 16.2 per cent to 16.0 per cent.
- 3. Includes higher and lower professional and managerial occupations (NS-SEC 1 and 2).

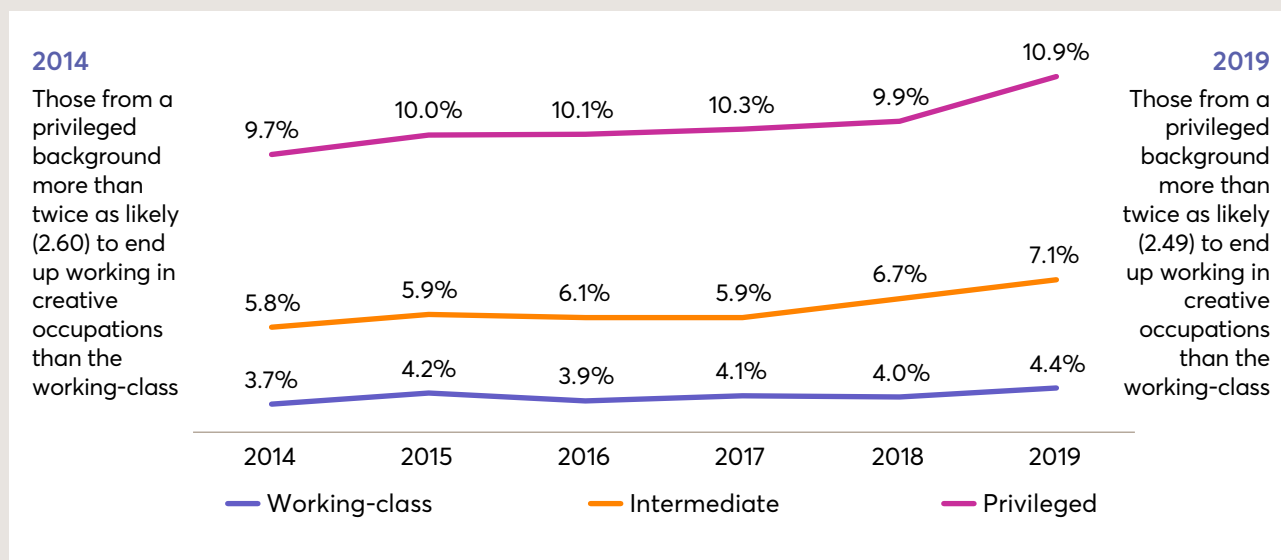
Throughout this paper we use odds ratios (the ratio of the odds of being employed if from a privileged background relative to the odds of being employed in a creative occupation from a working-class background)⁴ to provide an indication of the relative chance of being employed in a creative occupation depending on class origin. It is important to note that there will be a range of factors that influence employment outcomes alongside an individual's class (as defined by parental occupation), such as the quality of schooling, whether the individual has a degree and from where, their proximity to job opportunities in the creative sector and so forth. So while odds ratios provide an indication of the likelihood of an individual to end up in a creative occupation, they do not tell us the relative importance of class compared to other factors in determining this outcome.

What we find at this headline level is that those from privileged backgrounds are more than twice (2.5 times) as likely to end up in Creative Occupations than their working-class peers. In 2019, just 4.4 per cent of adults (aged 23-69) from working-class backgrounds found employment in creative roles, compared to 10.9 per cent of those from better-off backgrounds. The differentials are wider still between the fortunes of the so called 'elites' (those who parents were Higher managerial and professional occupations, NS-SEC 1) and the working-class – who are 2.6 times more likely to be employed in a creative occupation.

“Those from privileged backgrounds are 2.5 times more likely to end up in creative occupations than their working-class peers.”

This suggests social mobility is a greater issue for the sector, given those from better-off backgrounds are 1.7 times more likely to land in any professional role (Labour Force Survey, 2019).

Figure 2: Proportion of people aged 23-69 from different socio-economic backgrounds in creative occupations, 2014 - 2019



Source: Labour Force Survey, June – September 2014 – 2019, ONS

4. An odds ratio of one suggests no difference in likelihood between the social classes. An odds ratio greater than one suggests that those from privileged backgrounds are more likely to be employed in a creative occupation than their working-class peers; and an odds ratio of less than one suggests the opposite.

Despite efforts in recent years to improve diversity in the Creative Industries, the likelihood of working-class people finding work in creative occupations has remained largely unchanged, as has the proportion of the creative workforce from poorer backgrounds. In 2014, 17.6 per cent of those working in creative roles were of working-class origin compared to 16.2 per cent today. In part this is likely to reflect wider labour market trends where the overall numbers of people from working-class backgrounds has been declining in recent years as the economy has generally shifted towards higher value activities and professional and managerial roles (Create London 2008, Brook et al 2020).

What this means, however, is that while employment in creative occupations has increased by 313,250 over the past five years, the numbers of creative workers from working-class backgrounds increased by just 33,000 (equivalent to 11 per cent of the uplift in employment), while the total number of creative workers from privileged backgrounds increased by 200,000 (equivalent to 64 per cent of the uplift).

But what about individual Creative Industries? Does the music industry follow the same patterns as the Creative Industries overall? We know from existing research (e.g. Campbell et al 2019, Giles et al 2020) that the sub-sectors constituting the Creative Industries differ from each other in important ways, even where they share core characteristics which allow them to be grouped together under the category of Creative Industries (DCMS 2001, Bakhshi 2013).

Table 1 (overleaf) presents the class origin of those working in different occupational sub-groups in the Creative Industries.⁵ What is striking is that, with the exception of Crafts, class imbalances exist across every creative industry.

“Class imbalances exist across every creative industry with the exception of Craft; and are most pronounced in Publishing and Architecture.”

We observe a degree of variability in the relative performance of different creative sub-groups year to year, which may in part reflect low sample sizes. However, Publishing and Architecture demonstrate the most pronounced and enduring class-based exclusions over the five-year period. In 2019, 58 per cent of those working in Publishing roles were from privileged backgrounds, while just 13 per cent were of working-class origin. Similarly, the proportion of those working in Architecture from working-class backgrounds has averaged around 13 per cent over this period.

Other sub-sectors where class divides are particularly pronounced in some of the years of study include Music, performing and visual arts, where just 12 per cent of those working in these occupations in 2019 were working-class; and Film, TV, video, radio and photography, which has amongst the lowest representation of those of working-class origin in various years, if not in the most recent year in the study period.

Similarly, across most years, those from privileged backgrounds dominate the Advertising and Marketing occupation sub-group, comprising more than half (55 per cent) of the workforce in 2019. This is something echoed in our more granular analysis of individual creative occupations (Figure 3).

5. The occupational groupings used throughout this research are based on the standard DCMS definitions using Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes. Please refer to Annex A for further details.

Table 1: Class origin of people aged 23-69 working in creative occupations, 2014-2019

Occupations	Class origin	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Advertising and Marketing	Privileged	52%	53%	56%	52%	50%	55%
	Intermediate	28%	28%	27%	28%	33%	30%
	Working-class	19%	20%	16%	20%	17%	15%
	Unweighted Base	444	514	434	526	443	530
Architecture	Privileged	47%	51%	54%	57%	49%	50%
	Intermediate	39%	37%	35%	28%	33%	38%
	Working-class	14%	11%	11%	15%	18%	12%
	Unweighted Base	129	99	88	115	88	101
Crafts	Privileged	24%	*	31%	*	*	28%
	Intermediate	47%	*	42%	*	*	40%
	Working-class	30%	*	27%	*	*	32%
	Unweighted Base	113	*	91	*	*	91
Design and designer fashion	Privileged	46%	43%	46%	54%	51%	46%
	Intermediate	30%	37%	35%	28%	39%	38%
	Working-class	23%	21%	19%	19%	10%	15%
	Unweighted Base	149	172	139	161	140	149
Film, TV, video, radio, and photography	Privileged	47%	57%	48%	52%	57%	51%
	Intermediate	41%	29%	34%	28%	27%	32%
	Working-class	12%	15%	18%	20%	16%	16%
	Unweighted Base	153	142	148	142	132	152
IT. Software and computer services	Privileged	48%	46%	50%	56%	52%	52%
	Intermediate	33%	34%	32%	30%	30%	29%
	Working-class	19%	20%	18%	14%	18%	19%
	Unweighted Base	559	573	584	545	601	643
Publishing	Privileged	59%	65%	63%	60%	42%	58%
	Intermediate	31%	22%	28%	25%	42%	28%
	Working-class	10%	13%	9%	15%	16%	13%
	Unweighted Base	152	147	169	156	140	149
Museums, Galleries and Libraries	Privileged	*	*	61%	48%	*	*
	Intermediate	*	*	19%	29%	*	*
	Working-class	*	*	20%	23%	*	*
	Unweighted Base	*	*	57	51	*	*
Music, performing and visual arts	Privileged	51%	49%	43%	45%	56%	57%
	Intermediate	31%	30%	36%	35%	25%	32%
	Working-class	17%	21%	21%	20%	20%	12%
	Unweighted Base	181	150	141	157	136	143
Creative Occupations	Privileged	49%	49%	51%	52%	50%	52%
	Intermediate	33%	31%	32%	30%	32%	32%
	Working-class	18%	19%	17%	18%	17%	16%
	Unweighted Base	1,928	1,971	1,851	1,939	1,807	1,995
Total Workforce	Privileged	32%	33%	34%	35%	36%	36%
	Intermediate	37%	36%	35%	35%	34%	35%
	Working-class	31%	31%	30%	30%	30%	29%
	Unweighted Base	31,900	31,516	29,134	30,055	28,224	28,333

Source: Labour Force Survey, June – September 2014 – 2019, ONS

Previous research has found there exists considerable variation in the 'exclusiveness' of different occupations, even when looking at a sub-group of roles that might be classed as 'top professions' or elite occupations (Friedman and Laurison 2019, Laurison and Friedman 2016, The Sutton Trust and Social Mobility Commission 2019). Figure 3 considers the class origin of those working in a selection of individual creative occupations. It is important to note that several creative occupations are excluded given data suppression on the grounds of potential disclosure and/or low unweighted bases ($n < 50$). The roles listed do, however, account for 75 per cent of total employment in creative occupations.

What we find is significant variation in the extent of class imbalances evident in different creative occupations.

For example, those from privileged backgrounds are between 4 and 5 times more likely to be working as Advertising and PR directors or Marketing and sales directors. In these occupations those from privileged backgrounds comprise nearly two thirds of the workforce, while those of working-class origin fill around one in ten of these roles.

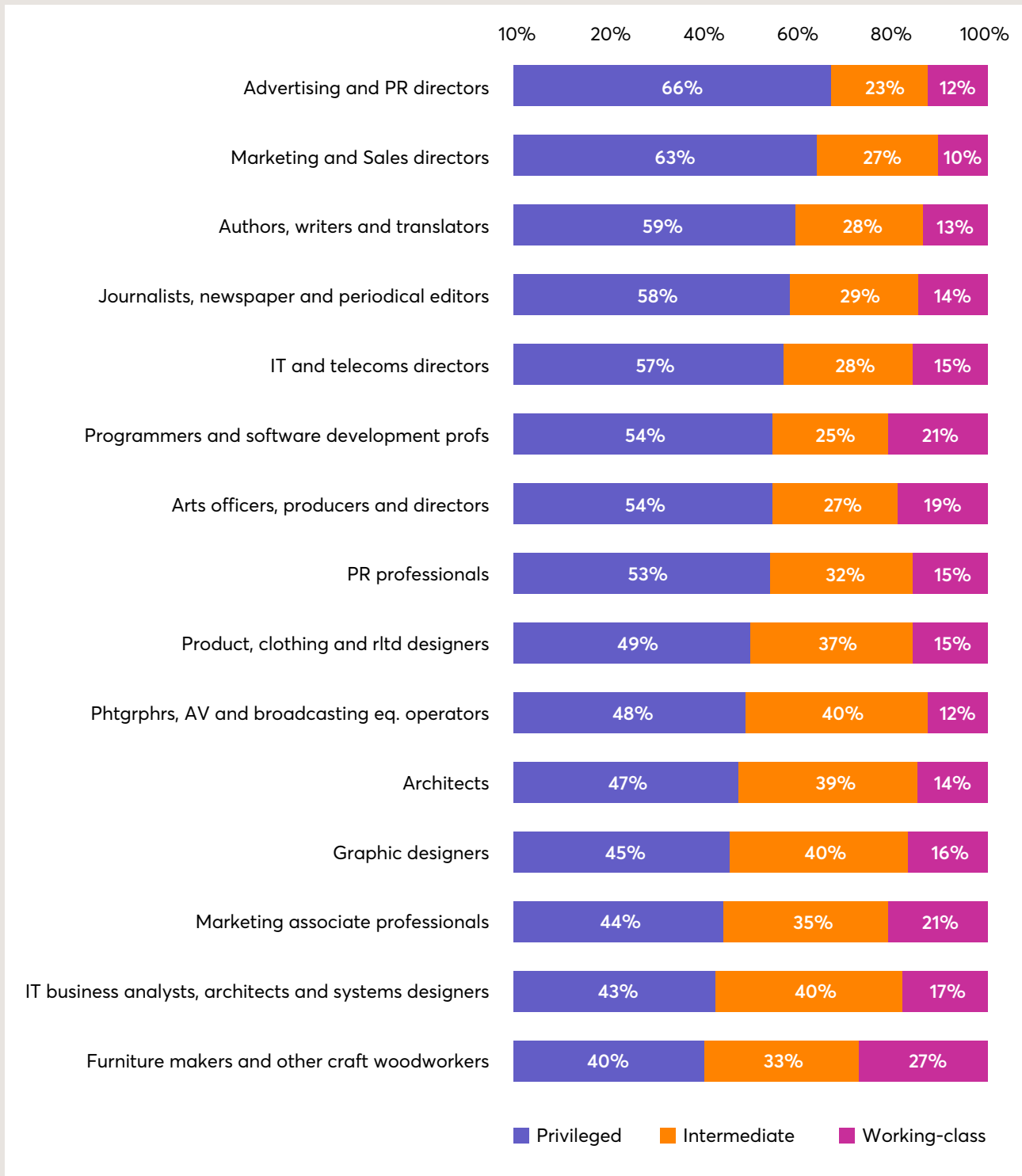
Those from privileged backgrounds also dominate key creative roles in:

- **Publishing:** Authors, writers and translators (59 per cent of the workforce) and Journalists, newspaper and periodical editors (58 per cent);
- **IT, software and computer services:** such as IT and telecoms directors (57 per cent); and Programmers and software development professionals (54 per cent);
- **Film, TV, radio and photography:** Arts officers, producers and directors (54 per cent).

At the other end of the scale, class divides are less pronounced amongst Furniture makers and other craft woodworkers (the only craft occupation for which we have robust data from the LFS), although it is noteworthy that this is considered to be a routine occupation (NS-SEC 7) so can hardly be considered a sign of positive social mobility.

Who gets on stage, page and screen is currently a major question for media and policy discussions and our 2019 data suggests those from privileged backgrounds dominate key creative roles.

Figure 3: Class origin profile of creative occupations, 2019



Source: Labour Force Survey, June – September 2019, ONS

3

Exploring differences in job quality, advancement and progression

Over the past decade, there has been growing emphasis on job quality: in part as a consequence of stagnating productivity and wages, and growing job insecurity since the financial crisis; and in part because of increased recognition that an individual's experience at work has a significant impact on their levels of engagement, productivity and wellbeing (RSA/Carnegie Trust 2020, Taylor 2017, Work Foundation 2016). Efforts to establish more robust mechanisms for measuring job quality concluded a single metric will fail to adequately capture the multi-faceted nature of 'good work', and instead points to the need to consider a range of indicators spanning job security and employment terms; pay and benefits; skills utilisation and opportunities for progression; health and wellbeing at work; job flexibility and work life balance; control, autonomy, support and employee voice (Irvine et al 2018).

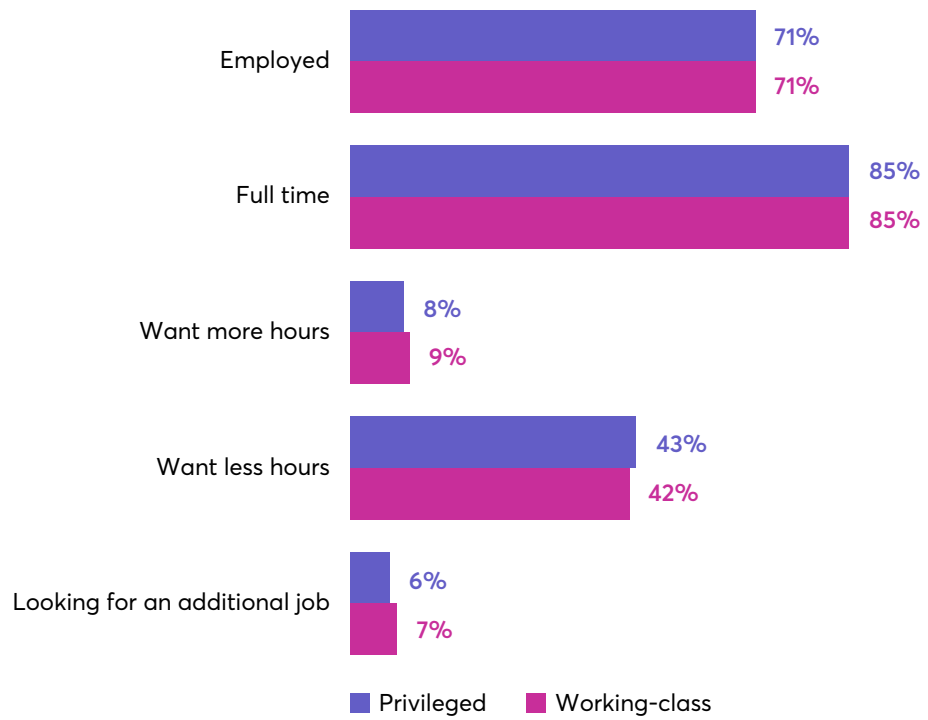
Despite mounting concerns about social class inequalities in the Creative Industries, thus far the literature has neglected to provide an analysis of the experiences of those from different class backgrounds when they are successful in securing a creative role.

Existing studies have focused on the class pay gap (O'Brien et al. 2016); the way class affects job mobility (Friedman et al 2017); and the ways in which social class origins affect people's ability to get jobs in select subsectors of the Creative Industries (e.g. the Performer's Alliance APPG Inquiry 2019). However, thus far, the literature has neglected to provide analysis of different measures of job quality, and more broadly, the relationship between job quality and social class remains underexplored. As such, little is known about whether people's social class origins can determine differences in the quality of their working lives.

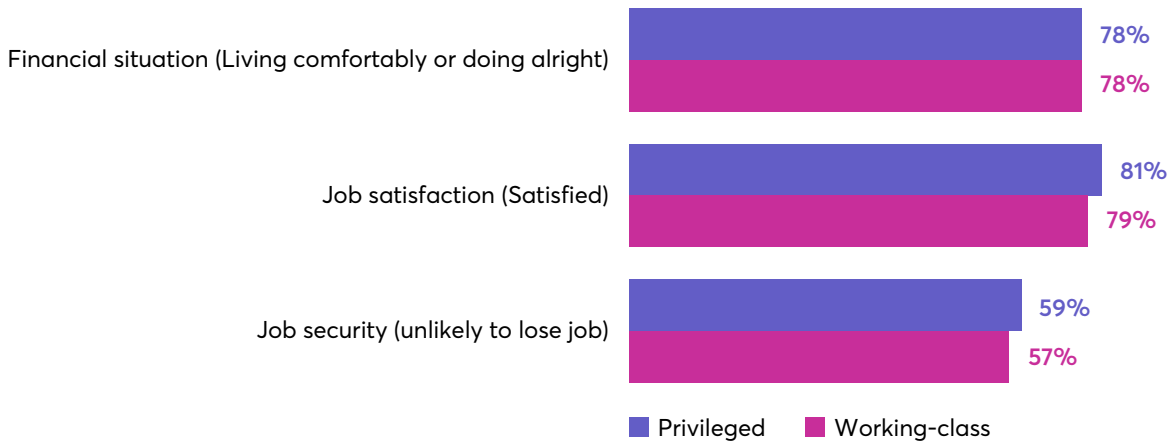
Figure 4 explores the experiences of those from different class backgrounds working in creative occupations across a range of measures of job quality, drawn from the Labour Force Survey and Understanding Society. While these fall short of capturing all facets of job quality, they do provide an initial assessment of whether and where there exists evidence of different experiences at work between the classes.

We find little difference in the employment status or working patterns of those from working-class backgrounds compared to their privileged counterparts; nor in their desire to work more or less hours, or to find a different or additional job.

Figure 4: Measures of job quality in creative occupations by class origin



Source: Labour Force Survey, June – September 2019



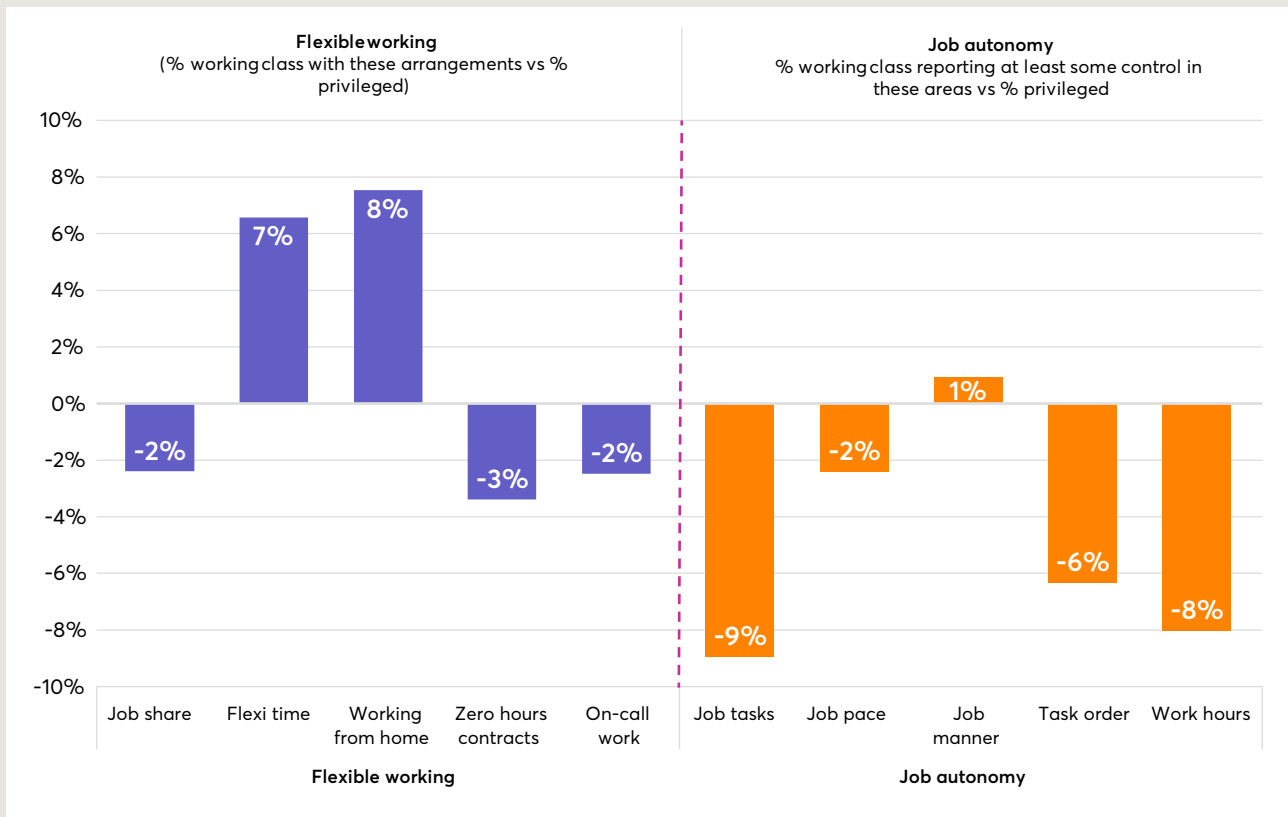
Source: Understanding Society, 2017/18*

Generally, we observe only very marginal differences in job satisfaction and job security of workers of different class origin working within creative occupations. There is, however, evidence of variation in job flexibility and autonomy. Those from working-class backgrounds are found to be more likely to report being able to work 'flexi time' or from home, and slightly less likely to have the option of job share or to work on-call. Across different measures of control over aspects of work, those from working-class background are found

to consistently experience less autonomy than their more privileged peers working in creative occupations, except for in determining how they go about their job. The differences between the classes are most pronounced when we consider control over job tasks (where 78 per cent of those from working-class backgrounds report having at least some control, compared to 87 per cent of those from privileged backgrounds), task order (87 per cent vs 94 per cent) and working hours (68 per cent vs 76 per cent). Overall though, those working in creative occupations (irrespective of their class origin) tend to report greater autonomy than those working in other parts of the economy – with a differential of approximately 6 percentage points between creative occupations and all occupations in all domains except for control over work hours, where the differential is considerably wider (18 pp), likely reflecting the high levels of self-employment in the creative sector (Giles et al, 2020).

“Those from working-class backgrounds tend to experience less autonomy than their privileged peers, particularly over job tasks, task order or work hours.”

Figure 5: Job flexibility and autonomy by class origin, creative occupations, 2016/17



Source: Understanding Society, 2016/17, ONS

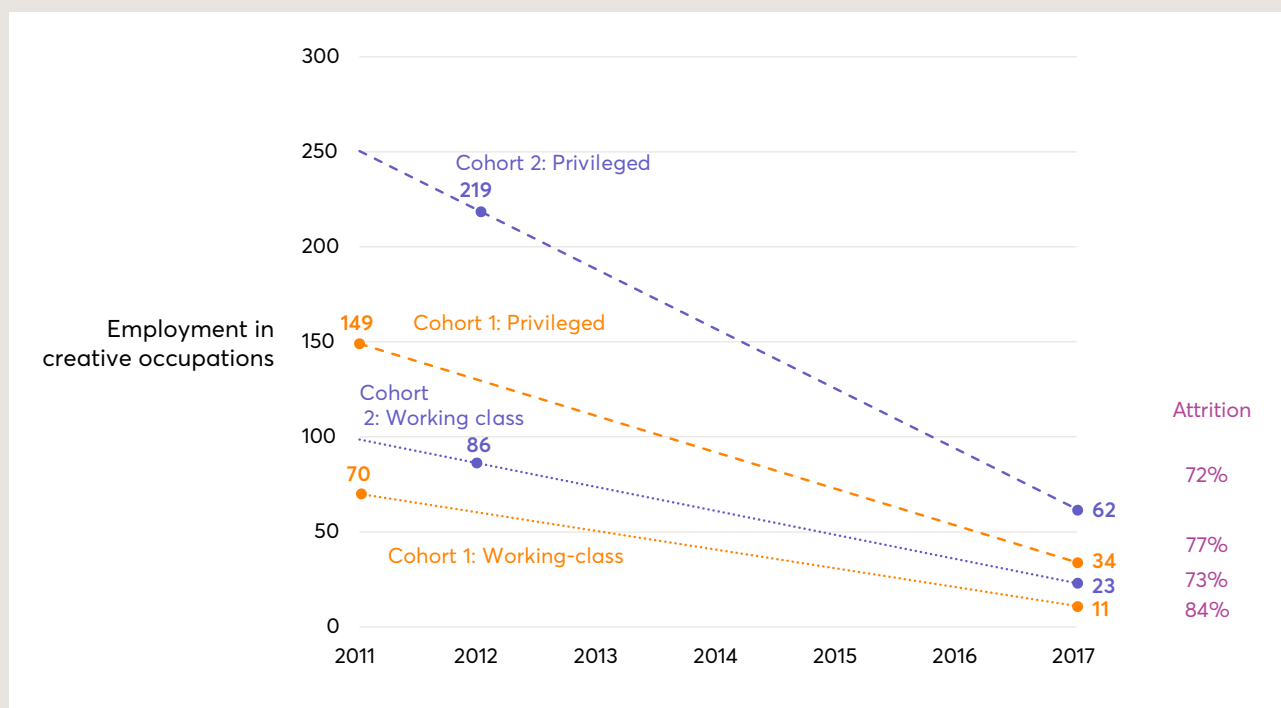
Alongside measures of job quality, we also consider indicators of retention, progression and advancement in creative occupations. Using longitudinal data from Understanding Society, we can track the retention and attrition rates of those of different class origin working within creative occupations over time (see Annex A for further details).

Figure 6 presents analysis for two cohorts: those employed in creative roles in 2011/12 (Cohort 1) and in 2012/13 (Cohort 2), considering the numbers that remained employed in creative occupations by 2017. Overall, attrition rates are high – between 70 and 80 per cent.

When we examine who stays and who goes, we find little consistent evidence of class differences. For the 2012/13 cohort, the rate of attrition is similar amongst those from a privileged and working-class background (72 per cent and 73 per cent respectively). In contrast, when we explore the paths of those working in creative occupations in 2011/12, we find 84 per cent of those from working-class backgrounds have left, compared to 73 per cent of their privileged peers.

We also sought to use a pooled sample of longitudinal data from Understanding Society (2011/12 – 2017/18) to assess whether those of different class origin were more or less likely to move into managerial positions while in creative roles. We find that just one in ten (10 per cent) of those from working-class backgrounds had progressed from non-managerial to managerial positions between 2011 and 2017, compared to 12 per cent of those from privileged backgrounds.

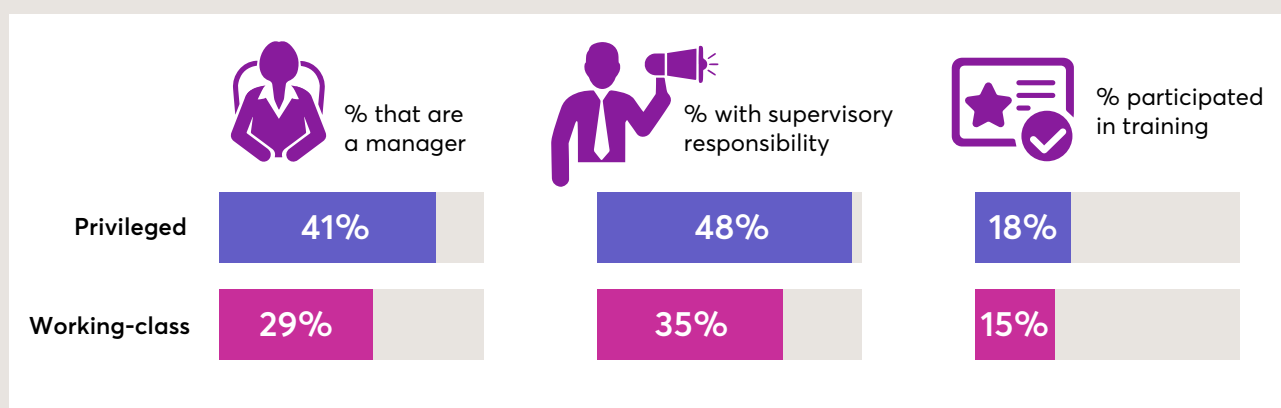
Figure 6: Attrition rates by class origin, creative occupations, 2011/12 – 2016/17



Source: Understanding society, 2011/12 – 2017/18, ONS

Indeed, we find that those from working-class backgrounds are less likely to be managers or to have supervisory responsibility than their middle and upper middle-class peers, with a c.12 percentage point difference between the classes (Figure 7). They are also slightly less likely to have participated in training in the past three months, though the differential is less pronounced. Taken together this echoes wider evidence (see for example, Friedman et al, 2017; Directors UK, 2018; UK Screen Alliance, 2019) of a lack of diversity in leadership roles in the sector and suggests that even when successful in landing a creative role, those from working-class background face further obstacles to progressing in the sector.

Figure 7: Indicators of progression in creative occupations by class origin, 2019



Source: Labour Force Survey, June – September 2019, ONS

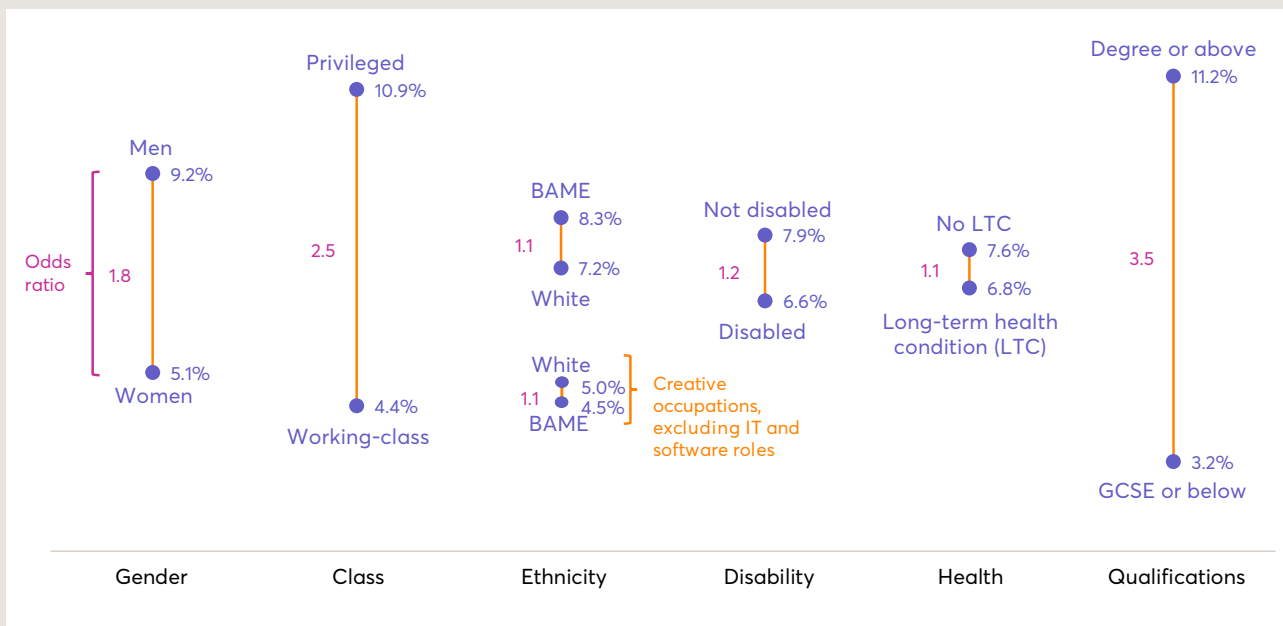
Double disadvantage: a primer on intersectionality and the significance of class

While our findings suggest that class is an important determinant of whether or not people are successful in getting in and getting on in the Creative Industries, it is not the only factor at play. Research points to wider inequalities and exclusions associated with an individual's gender, ethnicity, whether they have a disability or long-term health condition, and skill-levels; as well as where in the UK they live (Tatli and Özbilgin, 2012; Brook, O'Brien, and Taylor, 2018; Conor, Gill, and Taylor, 2015; Kirby, 2016).

Women are underrepresented, comprising only one-third of the workforce in creative occupations. While those from minority ethnic backgrounds are slightly more likely to be employed in creative occupations (with an odds ratio of 1.1), this is likely to reflect both the concentration of the Creative Industries in ethnically-diverse London and the dominance of the IT occupational cluster. IT employs a far greater share of workers from ethnic minority backgrounds than other creative occupations (O'Brien et al 2016). Indeed, when we look at creative roles outside of IT and software, the situation is reversed and those from ethnic minorities are underrepresented (4.5 per cent of BAME workers are employed in non-IT creative roles, compared to 5.0 per cent of those who are white).

Those who are able-bodied are also between 10–20 per cent more likely to land a creative role than those with a disability or long-term health condition. As we have seen previously, those from privileged backgrounds are 2.5 more likely to be employed in creative occupations. The qualifications of workers also matter greatly; with those with a degree or other HE qualification being more than three times more likely to land a job in creative occupations than those qualified at GCSE-level or below.

Figure 8: Odds and odds ratios of people aged 23-69 from different backgrounds being employed in creative occupations, 2019



Source: Labour Force Survey, June – September 2019, ONS

But how do these factors interact and potentially compound disadvantage in accessing and progressing within creative occupations? Figure 9 illustrates the likelihood of those of different demographic and socio-economic backgrounds of landing in employment in creative occupations.

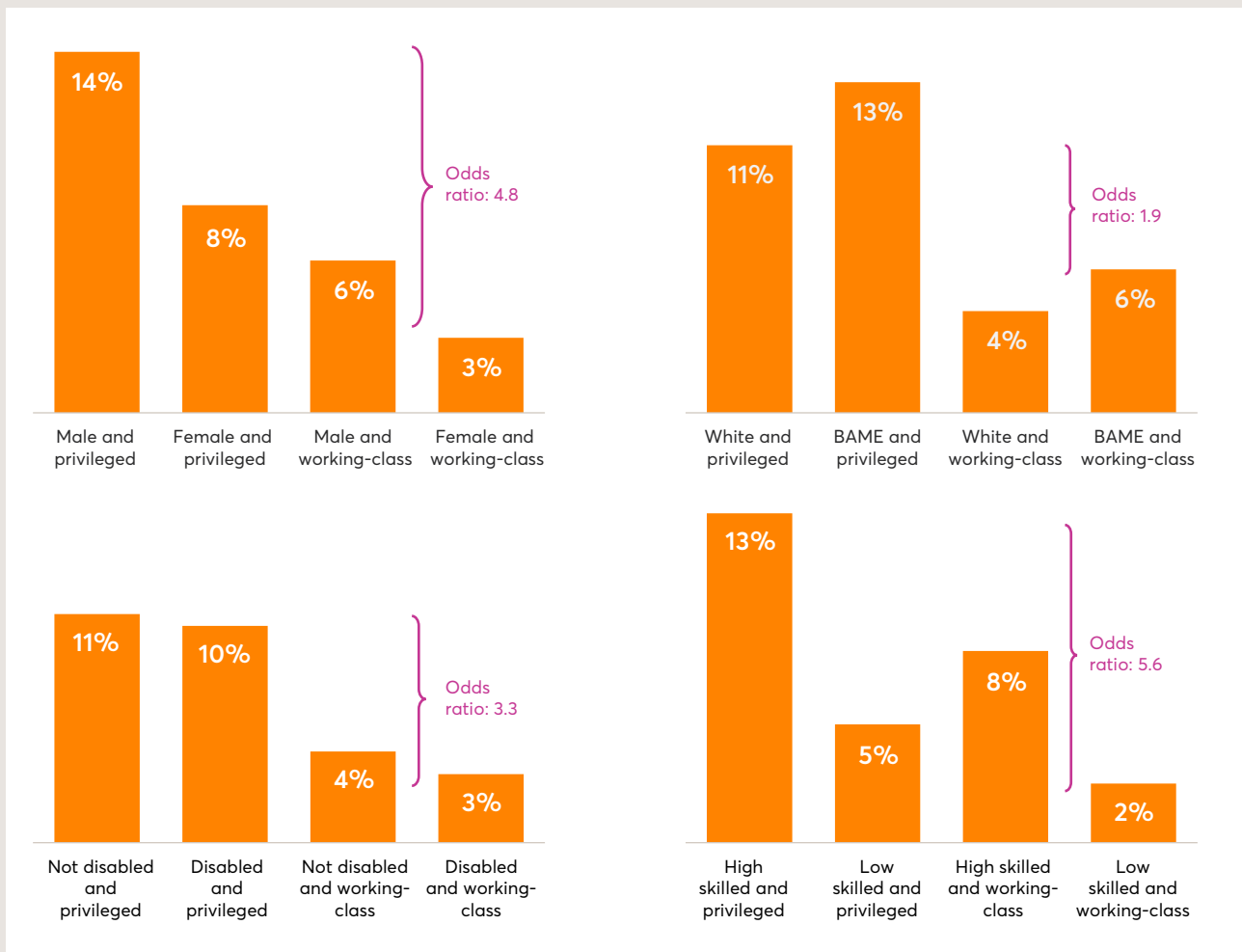
What we find is that women, people from minority ethnic backgrounds, those with a disability, and those with low skill levels from working-class backgrounds generally experience multiple disadvantages in getting into creative occupations.

For example, men from privileged backgrounds are 4.8 times more likely to secure work in creative occupations than working-class women. Someone of working-class background with a disability is more than 3 times less likely than their privileged, able-bodied counterparts to secure a job in a creative occupation.

“Those from a privileged background with a degree-level qualification are more than five times more likely to land a creative job than those from a working-class background only qualified to GCSE-level.”

The intersection of class and skills has a pronounced impact on the likelihood of landing a creative job: those from a privileged background who are qualified to degree-level or above are 5.6 times as likely to secure a creative role than those of working-class background who are only skilled to GCSE-level.

Figure 9: Exploring intersectionality – odds and odds ratios of people aged 23-69 from different backgrounds being employed in creative occupations, 2019



Source: Labour Force Survey, June – September 2019, ONS

Note: High skilled refers to those qualified to degree-level or above. Low skilled refers to those qualified to GCSE level or equivalent (exc. those with no qualifications due to data suppression).

4

Conclusions and next steps for the Policy Review Series

This paper – the first from the PEC’s Policy Review Series on Class in the Creative Industries – has sought to establish an up to date (albeit pre-pandemic) quantitative picture of class in the Creative Industries. The findings paint a concerning picture of widespread and persistent class imbalances in the sector.

At a headline level, those from privileged backgrounds are more than twice as likely to end up in Creative Occupations than their working-class peers. The privileged dominate key creative roles in the industry: our 2019 data offers little in the way of reassurance for those concerned that talented individuals from working-class origin might make it into the occupations that include our curators, or authors, our musicians, artists, actors and entertainers, and our film-makers. And when compared to the picture of social mobility into professional and managerial occupations in other sectors, the data suggests social mobility is a greater issue for the Creative Industries than across the wider economy.

Our research suggests that the issue does not end with whether or not those from a working-class background can make it into our Creative Industries, but rather whether they are able to thrive and progress once there. Our findings echo wider evidence in suggesting that those from working-class backgrounds are less likely to be managers or to have supervisory responsibility than their middle and upper middle-class peers, with a 10 percentage point (or more) difference between the classes.

Arguably most concerningly, the likelihood of those of working-class origin finding work in creative occupations has remained largely unchanged over the past five years, as has the proportion of the creative workforce from poorer backgrounds. The Creative Industries have been one of the UK economy’s greatest success stories creating over 300,000 jobs over the past five years alone, yet the number of creative workers from working-class backgrounds has increased by just 33,000 over this period.

While this paper has established a baseline position of the participation, retention and progression of those of different class origin within the Creative Industries, the crucial next step is to understand the underlying causes of class imbalances and to identify how to enhance the current approach to secure sustained improvements.

We are not starting from a blank canvas. Existing evidence and discussion at a seminar hosted by the PEC in February points to a multitude of factors, including: education and skills; awareness and role models; early career opportunities (e.g. internships); financial security and the ability to take risks; geographic mobility; nepotism, sponsorship and representation; networks; recruitment practices and cultural matching; and cultural capital and workplace culture.

But while we have a range of ideas, and in some cases evidence, on the factors that influence an individual’s fate when looking to work and progress in the Creative Industries; we lack a coherent narrative about the scale and nature of their impact; which are most important and why; and the nuances to this story depending on the job role, business, sector, or circumstances of the individual.

There is also much work underway (see the recent Creative Industries Council (2020) monitoring report for a helpful summary). Employers across the sector are prioritising diversity and inclusion within their own businesses; changing recruitment practices, investing in educating their leaders and workers, and working to promote more inclusive workplaces. Industry stakeholders are acting too; to improve the measurement of diversity; establish new standards and conditions; and fund programmes to support those from working-class backgrounds to overcome some of the obstacles (particularly financial) to finding and progressing in work.

All of this work is vital. But the fact we are seeing very little shift in the make-up of the creative workforce suggests our efforts to date are falling short and raises important questions, not least: How can we more accurately and extensively measure class origin alongside other important dimensions of diversity such as gender and ethnicity? Are we fully addressing all of the underlying obstacles that those from working-class background face? Is there scope to enhance the current approach – through better business practices, programmes and policy? Can we improve coherence between different activities in order to prevent people ‘falling through the gaps’ and offer more comprehensive and sustained support that maximises both efficiency and impact?

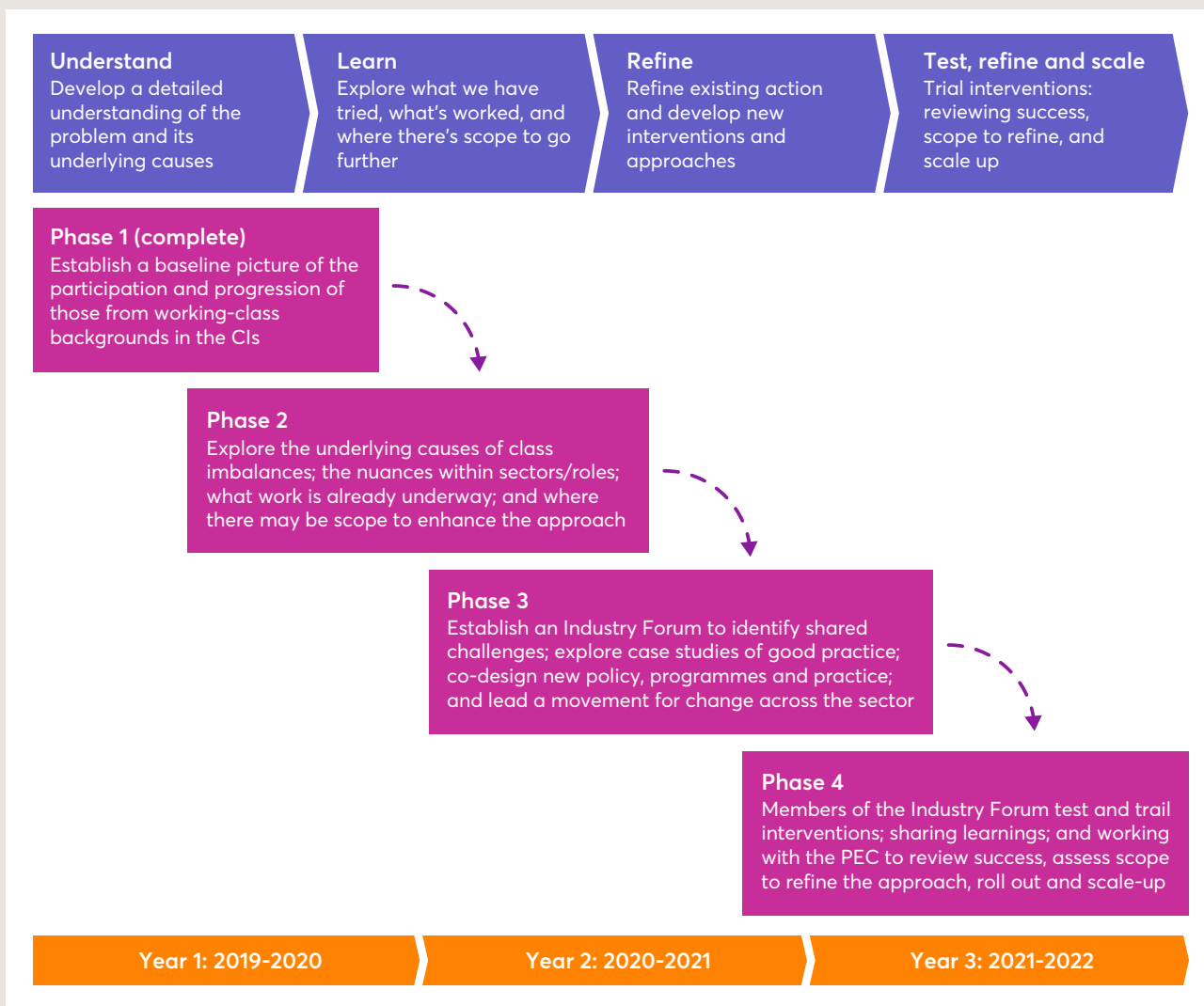
In the context of the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on already marginalised groups, it is more important than ever to consider how we can evolve and enhance our approach so that we are able to shift the dial on diversity in a significant and sustained way. This will be vital if we are to rebuild a genuinely more open and inclusive creative economy that creates opportunities for all, maximises talent, and enables all workers to thrive, irrespective of their socio-economic background; to show leadership as an industry on the vital issue of social mobility in the UK.

Overview of the Policy Review Series on Class in the Creative Industries

This Policy Review Series has been shaped in recognition that a lack of diversity is one of the most significant and entrenched challenges facing the Creative Industries. Not only is there a moral case to addressing this issue but there is a clear creative and economic case to do so. The industry has experienced a long-standing shortage of talent in key roles, so widening the pool from which employers recruit will be vital to easing pressures where they exist (Carey et al, 2019; Spilsbury and Bakhshi, 2019; Giles et al, 2020). Evidence suggests that more diverse businesses tend to be more innovative and fast-growing (de Vaan et al, 2015). Greater diversity in key creative roles is particularly vital; to ensure content is relevant and appeals to the full breadth of potential audiences, and that the views and voices of all corners of society are captured and represented across our creative media.

A key aim of Workstrand 2 of the PEC is, therefore, to drive real and lasting change in the picture of diversity amongst our creative workforce. Building on well-established models of the policy-cycle (HMT 2003) and identified ‘qualities’ or ‘fundamentals’ of good policy-making (Cabinet Office 1999, IoG 2011), Figure 10 captures the planned phases of the Policy Review Series on Class in the Creative Industries, and our anticipated ‘pathway to impact’.

Figure 10: Class in the CIs Policy Review Series: work phases and pathway to impact



The PEC’s Policy Review Series on Class in the Creative Industries seeks to act as a convening force through which to catalyse collaborative action – led by industry, trade bodies, wider stakeholders and Government – on this vital issue.

Engagement is a central part of the PEC’s approach, and we recognise that we are not starting from a blank canvas here and that much work is already underway. As such our focus will be on building on existing insight, seeking to enhance the current approach, and working in partnership with wider stakeholders that share our commitment to supporting the ongoing success of the Creative Industries.

We invite Government, Industry and Occupational bodies, businesses, and other industry stakeholders to work with us, to maximise the depth, reach and impact of the research and collectively drive significant and sustained change; to shift the picture of class in the Creative Industries.

5

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6

Annex A: Methodology

The LFS is a UK-wide household survey and studies the employment circumstances amongst the UK population. Carried out by ONS on a quarterly basis, it is a highly regarded UK data source that is used to underpin key labour market statistics. It provides data at a level of precision not matched by any other surveys, interviewing approximately 60,000 households, comprising 150,000 people, each quarter. The survey covers both payroll employees and the self-employed – which is of vital importance to the Creative Industries given the propensity for freelance working in some sub-sectors.

Understanding Society is the UK's largest longitudinal survey, covering over 40,000 households. The survey covers people of all ages, collecting information on all members of the household; with separate surveys for children aged 10-15 and adults. It explores a range of themes such as family life, education, employment, finance, health and wellbeing. While some of its sample dates back to 1991 (as the British Household Panel Survey), the first wave of Understanding Society relates to 2009/11, while Wave 8 relates to 2016/18. As a longitudinal survey, Understanding Society can provide valuable intelligence on the quality of current work, as well as employment histories, transitions in and out of employment and career progression.

Table 2: Breakdown of cohort by subject group

Creative occupations Group	SOC (2010)	Description
Advertising and marketing	1132	Marketing and sales directors
	1134	Advertising and public relations directors
	2472	Public relations professionals
	2473	Advertising accounts managers and creative directors
	3543	Marketing associate professionals
Architecture	2431	Architects
	2432	Town planning officers
	2435	Chartered architectural technologists
Crafts	3121	Architectural and town planning technicians
	5211	Smiths and forge workers
	5411	Weavers and knitters
	5441	Glass and ceramics makers, decorators and finishers
	5442	Furniture makers and other craft woodworkers
	5449	Other skilled trades not elsewhere classified
Design: Product, graphic and fashion design	3421	Graphic designers
	3422	Product, clothing and related designers
Film, TV, video, radio and photography	3416	Arts officers, producers and directors
	3417	Photographers, audio-visual and broadcasting equipment operators
IT, software and computer services	1136	Information technology and telecommunications directors
	2135	IT business analysts, architects and systems designers
	2136	Programmers and software development professionals
	2137	Web design and development professionals
Publishing	2471	Journalists, newspaper and periodical editors
	3412	Authors, writers and translators
Museums, galleries and libraries	2451	Librarians
	2452	Archivists and curators
Music, performing and visual arts	3411	Artists
	3413	Actors, entertainers and presenters
	3414	Dancers and choreographers
	3415	Musicians

About the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre

The Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (PEC) works to support the growth of the UK's Creative Industries through the production of independent and authoritative evidence and policy advice.

Led by Nesta and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council as part of the UK Government's Industrial Strategy, the Centre comprises of a consortium of universities from across the UK (Birmingham; Cardiff; Edinburgh; Glasgow; Work Foundation at Lancaster University; LSE; Manchester; Newcastle; Sussex; Ulster). The PEC works with a diverse range of industry partners including the Creative Industries Federation.

For more details visit www.pec.ac.uk and [@CreativePEC](https://twitter.com/CreativePEC)

About Workstrand 2: Skills, Talent and Diversity

Work Advance leads the PEC's area of work on Skills, Talent and Diversity, in partnership with other researchers from across the PEC consortium – forming Workstrand 2. In particular, it is progressing work with Newcastle University, which leads the research strand on International Competitiveness, including immigration.

Together we are pursuing a dynamic and diverse research agenda., This seeks to: provide an authoritative overview of the current strategic skills demands for creative workers; understand the distribution of opportunities and barriers to labour market and career success for a range of underrepresented demographic and socio-economic groups; and, ultimately, develop policy tools to incentivise innovation in business practices and support stronger investment to grow the creative skills base and meet the needs of the UK's creative economy.

If you'd like this publication in an alternative format such as Braille, or large print, please contact us at: enquiries@pec.ac.uk

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