



10 April 2011

School of Communication Arts - 'Mad Men' for a new era

4 February 2010

A school to train the next generation of advertising professionals is to be accredited by the University of the Arts London. The School of Communication Arts will be run by industry experts and will offer a National Diploma in the subject, to be developed by employers. The curriculum for the course will be written using wiki technology, allowing the industry to ensure students are equipped with the skills it needs. The school will open its doors to the first 50 students in September 2010.

Readers' comments

- **Rutherford** 8 February, 2010

RE; School of Communication Arts - 'Mad Men' for a new era (04 February 2010)

While the input from the advertising industry is an invaluable (and too-often absent) element in university Advertising programmes, there is risk that a programme "developed by employers... allowing the industry to ensure [that] students are equipped with the skills it needs" reduces education to 'job training'.

As indicated by the transfer of responsibility for HE to the business domain of Lord Mandelson, industry's increasingly important role in the design of educational programmes reflects the view of university education as primarily (if not exclusively) a form of job training. While we accept without question or hesitation the responsibility to ensure the practical relevance of our courses, there are however, still a few of us who believe that we also have a duty to another, higher objective: to prepare informed citizens for the challenges of the new 'post-verbal' world we will not live to see.

Accordingly, by teaching our students to understand advertising, as well as to do it, we must equip our graduates with the skills necessary to become:

1. competent communications professionals with the skills necessary for a rewarding, self-directed career in advertising, brand management or corporate communications;
2. informed and engaged members of the community, able to understand how advertising shapes who and what we want to be; and,
3. intelligent, self-aware individuals who are both capable of – and committed to – lifelong learning

In addition to teaching the strategies and techniques of advertising from a corporate perspective therefore (How We to Do It to Them), it is also important to provide students with an opportunity to examine How They Do It to Us in order to consider critically the power of advertising to shape our perceptions of the Product, the Politician and the Right Priorities.

With thanks and best regards,

Rutherford
Programme Leader - BA Advertising
University of Chester

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