

## Faculty Development And Professional Practices In Art & Design Education Training, Industry Exposure, Faculty Development Policies

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### ABSTRACT:

Faculty development plays a critical role in ensuring the quality, relevance, and sustainability of art and design education. The rapidly evolving nature of creative industries, technological advancements, emerging design practices, and changing professional expectations requires educators to continuously update their pedagogical, technical, disciplinary, and professional competencies. This paper examines the significance of faculty development and professional practices in art and design education, with particular emphasis on structured training, industry exposure, continuous professional engagement, and institutional faculty development policies. It argues that faculty development should extend beyond conventional workshops and formal training programmes to include industry collaborations, professional practice, creative research, exhibitions, residencies, technology-oriented learning, peer learning, and interdisciplinary engagement. Industry exposure enables faculty members to gain first-hand understanding of contemporary professional workflows, technologies, client expectations, and emerging career practices, which can subsequently be integrated into curriculum design and studio pedagogy. The paper further examines the role of institutional policies in creating an enabling environment through professional development funding, industry placements, research support, recognition of creative practice, mentoring mechanisms, and appropriate performance evaluation frameworks. It proposes an integrated model in which faculty learning, professional practice, industry engagement, curriculum renewal, and student development operate as interconnected processes. The paper concludes that sustained investment in faculty development can strengthen pedagogical innovation, curriculum relevance, professional preparedness, and employability of art and design graduates. Faculty development, therefore, should be viewed not merely as an institutional requirement but as a strategic mechanism for bridging academic knowledge with contemporary creative practice and fostering continuous educational transformation..

**Keywords:** Faculty Development, Art and Design Education, Professional Practice, Faculty Training, Industry Exposure, Creative Industries, Curriculum Development, Pedagogical Innovation, Professional Development Policies

### INTRODUCTION

For a research paper, this topic can be developed beyond the conventional discussion of teacher training by examining **faculty development as a continuous process that connects pedagogy, professional practice, industry exposure, research, technology, and institutional policy.**

The quality of art and design education is closely linked to the professional competence, creative engagement, pedagogical capabilities, and continuous development of its faculty members. Unlike disciplines in which knowledge may remain relatively stable over extended periods, art and design are characterised by rapid changes in technology, visual culture, professional practices, materials, production processes, and modes of communication. Consequently, faculty members in art and design institutions need to continually update their knowledge and professional capabilities.

Faculty development in art and design education should therefore not be understood merely as participation in formal training programmes or mandatory professional development activities. It should be viewed as a continuous and multidimensional process encompassing pedagogical development, disciplinary advancement, and industry exposure, technological up skilling, research, creative practice, professional networking, and reflective teaching.

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The role of the art and design educator is particularly complex. Faculty members are simultaneously teachers, practitioners, researchers, mentors, critics, facilitators and, in many cases, practicing artists or designers. Their professional identity is therefore located at the intersection of academic knowledge and creative practice.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Faculty development has emerged as an important dimension of quality enhancement in higher education. It encompasses the continuous development of teachers' disciplinary knowledge, pedagogical capabilities, research skills, technological competencies and professional identities. In art and design education, however, faculty development assumes a distinctive character because teaching is closely connected with creative practice, studio culture, professional engagement and rapidly changing technologies.

The literature suggests that effective professional development is most valuable when it is continuous, context-specific and connected to actual teaching practice rather than limited to isolated workshops or short-term training programmes. Timperley's synthesis of research on professional learning emphasises the importance of professional learning that develops teachers' knowledge and skills in ways connected to student learning and classroom practice. Similarly, broader international literature considers professional learning as a continuum extending from preparation and induction to continuing development throughout an educator's career.

For art and design educators, this continuum must additionally incorporate **professional practice, industry exposure, creative research and technological change**. The literature therefore points towards an integrated conception of faculty development in which the educator remains both an academic and an active participant in the evolving creative field.

Timperley's work highlights the importance of professional learning that is linked to teachers' knowledge, pedagogical practice and student outcomes. ' (<https://www.iiep.unesco.org/>)' This perspective is particularly relevant to art and design education, where professional learning cannot be separated easily from studio teaching, experimentation and reflective practice.

Research on professional development indicates that generic training programmes do not necessarily produce meaningful changes in teaching. Evidence reviewed by Popova et al. suggests that professional development tends to be more effective when it is subject-focused, connected with actual teaching practice and supported by appropriate institutional structures and incentives. ' (<https://www.iiep.unesco.org/>)

Studio-based education occupies a central position within art and design. Unlike conventional lecture-based teaching, studio pedagogy typically involves experimentation, iterative making, critique, demonstration, observation, discussion and individual mentoring.

Research reviewing creativity in art and design studio education identifies pedagogy as a significant area of scholarship, with attention to flexible, open-ended and improvisational approaches to teaching creativity. '<https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/pedagogical-practice>'

## OBJECTIVES

To examine existing faculty development practices in art and design institutions.

To evaluate the effectiveness of training and professional development programmes in enhancing faculty competencies.

To assess the extent and impact of industry exposure and professional practice among art and design faculty.

To analyse the effectiveness of institutional policies and administrative mechanisms supporting faculty development.

To identify challenges that limit faculty participation in professional training, industry collaboration, and continuous learning.

To develop recommendations for strengthening faculty development policies and industry-academia engagement to improve the quality and relevance of art and design education.

## CHANGING ROLE OF THE ART AND DESIGN FACULTY

The traditional role of an art or design teacher was largely centred on demonstrating techniques, providing studio instruction, conducting critiques and evaluating student work. Contemporary art and design education, however, requires a much broader role.

Today's faculty member may be expected to function as:

**Educator** – facilitating knowledge and skill development;

**Mentor** – guiding students' academic and professional growth;

**Practitioner** – maintaining engagement with contemporary creative practice;

**Researcher** – generating and disseminating new knowledge;

**Facilitator** – encouraging experimentation and independent learning;

**Industry liaison** – connecting students and institutions with professional organisations;

**Technology learner** – adapting to emerging digital tools;

**Curator** – organising exhibitions and creative platforms;

**Entrepreneurial mentor** – guiding students towards freelance and creative entrepreneurship; and

**Reflective practitioner** – continuously evaluating and improving teaching practices.

This expanded role requires faculty development to move beyond conventional teacher-training models.

## FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AS A CONTINUOUS PROCESS

Faculty development should be understood as a **lifelong professional learning cycle** rather than a one-time intervention.

A useful conceptual cycle can be represented as:

**Identify Needs → Train → Apply → Reflect → Receive Feedback → Update Skills → Innovate → Share Practice → Reassess Needs**

This cyclical approach is particularly relevant to art and design because technologies, software, materials, creative practices and industry expectations change continuously.

For instance, a faculty member teaching graphic design may need to periodically update knowledge of:

digital publishing;

motion graphics;

UX/UI;

generative technologies;

digital branding;

interactive media;

typography platforms;

digital fabrication; and

emerging visual communication practices.

Similarly, faculty teaching painting, sculpture, photography, animation, fashion or applied arts may need continuous exposure to new materials, technologies, processes and contemporary professional practices.

## DIMENSIONS OF FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Faculty development in art and design can be organised into several interconnected dimensions.

### 6.1 Pedagogical Development

Faculty members need training in contemporary teaching-learning methodologies, including:

studio-based learning;

project-based learning;

experiential learning;

problem-based learning;

collaborative learning;

interdisciplinary learning;

blended learning;

digital pedagogy; and

outcome-based education.

The objective is not simply to introduce new teaching methods but to determine **which pedagogical approach is**

appropriate for a particular creative discipline and learning objective.

## 6.2 Disciplinary Development

Faculty members need to remain current within their respective fields.

**This may involve:**

attending conferences;  
participating in workshops;  
undertaking certifications;  
attending masterclasses;  
participating in exhibitions;  
publishing research;  
undertaking creative projects;  
engaging with professional associations; and  
pursuing advanced study.

In art and design, **practice itself can constitute an important form of professional development.**

A practising artist or designer brings contemporary experience into the classroom, enabling students to understand how concepts and techniques operate within actual professional contexts.

## INDUSTRY EXPOSURE AS FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Industry exposure should be considered a significant component of faculty development.

While students benefit from industry interaction, faculty members also require opportunities to understand changing professional environments.

**Faculty exposure may include:**

short-term industry placements;  
professional residencies;  
studio visits;  
collaborative projects;  
industry-sponsored research;  
consultancy;  
professional workshops;  
participation in design competitions;  
collaborative exhibitions;  
interaction with creative agencies;  
participation in professional conferences; and  
observation of production environments.

Such exposure enables faculty members to bring **current professional knowledge into the curriculum.**

For example, a faculty member working temporarily with a branding agency may gain first-hand knowledge of client management, deadlines, presentations, brand strategy, market research and production workflows. These insights can subsequently be integrated into classroom projects.

## FROM INDUSTRY EXPOSURE TO KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

The effectiveness of industry exposure depends on what happens after the exposure.

A meaningful model would be:

**Faculty Industry Exposure → Reflection → Documentation → Classroom Integration → Student Application → Evaluation**

For example:

A faculty member undertakes a professional engagement in a design studio, learns about contemporary workflow and client communication, redesigns a studio assignment around an authentic professional brief, introduces industry-style presentations, and evaluates students using both academic and professional criteria.

In this way, industry exposure becomes a **mechanism for curriculum renewal**, rather than an isolated professional experience.

### TRAINING AND UP SKILLING

Training programmes should be aligned with actual professional and educational requirements rather than being conducted merely to fulfil procedural requirements.

Important areas of faculty training may include:

#### **Pedagogical training**

curriculum planning;  
assessment strategies;  
studio pedagogy;  
student mentoring;  
inclusive teaching;  
outcome-based education.

#### **Technology training**

emerging design software;  
AI-assisted creative tools;  
digital fabrication;  
3D modelling;  
animation;  
immersive technologies;  
digital portfolios;  
online teaching platforms.

#### **Professional training**

project management;  
client communication;  
intellectual property;  
copyright;  
professional ethics;  
freelancing;  
creative entrepreneurship.

#### **Research training**

research methodology;  
practice-based research;  
academic writing;  
publishing;  
documentation of creative practice;  
citation and referencing;  
research ethics.

### EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Technology represents one of the most significant areas requiring continuous faculty development.

The emergence of generative artificial intelligence, immersive environments, digital fabrication and other computational tools is changing how creative work is conceived, produced and distributed.

Faculty members therefore need to understand not only **how to use emerging technologies but also their educational, ethical and professional implications**.

**For example, AI-related faculty development could include:**

understanding generative AI workflows;  
prompt development;  
AI-assisted ideation;  
image generation and manipulation;  
authorship;  
copyright;  
originality;  
ethical use;  
bias;  
disclosure of AI-assisted work; and  
appropriate integration into studio pedagogy.

The objective should not be to replace traditional artistic skills with technology. Instead, technology should be positioned as an additional tool within a broader framework of **creative thinking, critical judgment and human authorship**.

### **PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH AND FACULTY DEVELOPMENT**

Art and design education has a distinctive relationship with research because creative practice itself can generate knowledge.

**Faculty development should therefore recognise forms of research such as:**

practice-based research;  
practice-led research;  
studio research;  
design research;  
visual research;  
material experimentation;  
curatorial research; and  
interdisciplinary research.

A faculty member developing a body of paintings, for example, may investigate material, cultural, visual or conceptual questions through artistic practice. Similarly, a designer may investigate user behaviour through iterative design experimentation.

Such research can enrich teaching because faculty members bring their own investigations into the studio environment.

### **CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE**

One important question for art and design institutions is whether faculty members should continue professional practice alongside teaching.

There are strong educational arguments in favour of maintaining professional engagement.

**A practising faculty member can provide students with insights into:**

contemporary industry expectations;  
professional standards;  
client relationships;  
current technologies;  
exhibitions;  
competitions;  
commissions;  
portfolio development;  
market trends; and  
professional ethics.

However, professional practice should not become a substitute for teaching or academic responsibilities. The ideal model is one in which **professional practice and academic teaching reinforce one another**.

### 13) FACULTY DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Institutional policy plays a critical role in transforming faculty development from an individual responsibility into a sustainable institutional practice.

A comprehensive faculty development policy should clearly define:

**Professional development expectations**

**Training opportunities**

**Industry exposure mechanisms**

**Research and creative practice support**

**Financial assistance**

**Leave provisions for professional development**

**Conference and workshop participation**

**Performance recognition**

**Mentoring mechanisms**

**Documentation and evaluation**

A policy should also recognise that different disciplines require different forms of professional development.

For example, a faculty member in painting may benefit from an artist residency or exhibition, while a UX design faculty member may benefit more from an industry placement or technology certification.

### 14) INDIVIDUAL FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Institutions could introduce an **Individual Faculty Development Plan (IFDP)**.

Each faculty member could identify annual or multi-year goals under categories such as:

| Area                | Possible Development Activity       |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Teaching            | Pedagogical training                |
| Discipline          | Advanced workshop/masterclass       |
| Industry            | Short-term placement                |
| Research            | Publication/project                 |
| Technology          | Software/AI training                |
| Practice            | Exhibition/design project           |
| Networking          | Conference/professional association |
| Student development | Mentorship initiative               |

This approach makes faculty development more structured and measurable while allowing individualisation.

### 15) FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AND STUDENT OUTCOME

The ultimate purpose of faculty development is improved student learning.

A useful relationship can be represented as:

**Faculty Development**

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**Improved Knowledge & Skills**

↓

**Innovative Pedagogy**

↓

**Improved Studio Learning**

↓

## Student Competencies



## Professional Readiness

The impact of faculty development can therefore be evaluated through student outcomes such as:

improved project quality;  
stronger portfolios;  
increased technical competence;  
greater confidence;  
improved critical thinking;  
better presentation skills;  
increased industry awareness; and  
improved employability.

## 16) RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For empirical research on this topic, a **mixed-method approach** was adopted for meaningful results.

### Sample

The study included:

faculty members from art and design institutions;  
heads of departments;  
academic administrators;  
industry professionals; and  
senior students.

Data collection tools

### Faculty questionnaire:

To examine training participation, industry exposure, professional practice and perceived development needs.

### Interviews:

To understand faculty experiences and institutional barriers.

### Industry interviews:

To determine whether faculty members' professional engagement contributes to industry-relevant education.

### Institutional policy analysis:

Review faculty development policies, appraisal systems, training provisions and industry collaboration frameworks.

### Case studies:

Examine institutions that have successfully integrated professional practice and industry exposure into faculty development.

## 17) RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions could form the basis of the study:

How does faculty development influence the quality of art and design education?

What forms of professional development are most relevant to art and design educators?

How does industry exposure influence faculty teaching practices?

To what extent does professional practice contribute to curriculum development?

How adequately do existing institutional policies support faculty development in art and design?

What barriers prevent faculty members from maintaining professional practice?

How can industry-academia partnerships contribute to faculty development?

How can emerging technologies be incorporated into faculty professional development?

How does faculty professional development influence student employability and professional preparedness?

What institutional framework can support sustainable faculty development in art and design education?

## 18) CONCLUSION

Faculty development is a critical but sometimes underexplored dimension of quality enhancement in art and design education. The rapidly changing nature of creative practice requires educators to continuously update their disciplinary knowledge, pedagogical approaches, technological competencies and understanding of professional environments.

Training programmes alone, however, are insufficient. Effective faculty development requires a combination of **continuous learning, professional practice, industry exposure, research, creative experimentation, peer learning and institutional support**.

Industry exposure is particularly valuable because it enables faculty members to experience current professional practices and translate those experiences into curriculum, studio pedagogy and student mentoring. At the same time, institutions must ensure that professional relevance does not undermine the critical, exploratory and socially responsive dimensions of art and design education.

The most effective model is therefore an **integrated faculty development ecosystem** in which academic learning, creative practice, industry engagement and institutional policy continuously inform one another.

A well-developed faculty does not merely transmit existing knowledge; it continuously renews knowledge, transforms professional experience into pedagogy, and creates learning environments that prepare students for an evolving creative world.

Faculty development in art and design education should be repositioned from a compliance-oriented training activity to a strategic academic and professional process. When institutions invest in continuous learning, industry exposure, creative practice and supportive development policies, faculty members become active bridges between academic knowledge and professional practice. This, in turn, strengthens curriculum relevance, pedagogical innovation, institutional quality and ultimately the professional preparedness of art and design graduates...

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