



# Are qualifications recognised?

by Graham Reed



In a recent survey of 1,000 employers in various industries about whether job applicants possess the skills to thrive in the work place, more than half of employers said finding qualified applicants was difficult.

It appears that many companies in our industry are pretending that all is well. They must believe because as so many people want to work in it that these future employees will get training somewhere somehow, so there is no need not make any investment in training.

I recently phoned some of the major programme producers to hear about their training policies. Only one of the companies I called had taken positive steps in training.

Shine had joined with Livity a production company that works with young people from diverse and disadvantage backgrounds. It's a social enterprise company helping young

creative people who may find it hard to enter the industry. With training they will produce programmes mainly as web content but hopefully eventually for broadcast. Any profits are put back into the company. The students would work with a tutor and also have mentoring from senior staff from Shine. This seems like a very good scheme to bring trained people into the industry. If all the major programme producers had schemes along these lines then that would be brilliant. But there will be only 8 students taken on which is only about 0.1% of the number of people working in the industry.

Talkback Thames had a scheme for taking on 15 to 18 year olds which they called a 'Work Inspiration' Scheme. I contacted them a few times but I was unable to find out exactly what the students got out of the scheme and whether it would lead to any work.

Channel 4 is investing £250k (it made £40m profit in 2010) in an Investigative Journalism Training scheme for reporters who will

work on the 'Dispatches' strand of programmes. It will offer courses for 20 people over the next 2 years.

When students leave the recognised universities that are known to produce good graduates, i.e., Bournemouth Film School, Ravensbourne, NFTS, one asks if their qualifications are recognised and what value are put on them by TV executives?

Consider the situation where a production company wants to employ a director for a new entertainment show and have called two directors for a meeting. One has a MA from NFTS and the other has spent some time in Hollywood.

The one with the MA has been through many tough selection processes to get to do the MA and has £20k of student debt, whilst the other has a friend in Hollywood and has spent some time 'helping' on film shoots and has learnt the Hollywood way of building up his CV.

