

Essential facts: the nature of designer fashion and its markets
Professor Simon Roodhouse, Bolton Institute of Higher Education

The need to define the sector is central to any attempt at collecting data and the importance of being precise about the descriptors for sub sectors. This is where judgements are needed to reflect the extent of a sub sector within the accepted national norms such as SIC and SOC and avoids some of the problems of overlap or double counting. It also raises the question as to who is being counted. In this case the research focussed on the fashion designer whether working as a sole trader or in a small to medium enterprise.

The sources used to inform the DCMS mapping document, 2001 referred to and which form the base comparative data are largely national, for example the Department of Trade and Industry, at the United Kingdom Fashion Exports, and the DCMS Creative Industries Mapping Document, 1998 as well as Mintel 2000 (website).

Designer fashion: *essential facts* is based on regional primary data collection and as a result provides a contemporary picture of the industry. It is a snapshot of the sector in two Northern regions and provides baseline data for those with a direct interest in designer fashion, or as a mechanism with which to pursue economic and social goals