

# Editorial

**Just how far have we moved on in our use of ICT in careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG)? In the early days of computing, the technology push was dominant: to get ever more powerful hardware. Even then, a few organisations were thinking about the pedagogy and the effective use of ICT in enhancing career learning and development. In the schools sector, Careersoft stands out as a company with a careers education vision that displayed itself in its simulations for the BBC computer and more recently in programs such as ani-mods for animated e-learning.**

Still, I can't escape the feeling that the creative and innovative use of ICT in CEIAG is patchy, especially at the institutional level. Where are the 'thought leaders' among careers coordinators in schools who are aware of developments in ICT and learning methods and are actively thinking of how to connect CEIAG to the mainstream?

Michael Larbalestier makes the case strongly why careers and personal advisers need to understand the social web so that they can help their clients engage with it responsibly and effectively. The organisation of personal identity has always been recognised as one of the foundation stones of career development. In the internet age, this takes on new meaning as more and more people extend their social and support networks online. Individuals need to learn how to manage their presence on the social web as it is a way of presenting themselves to potential selectors, demonstrating a track record and finding out about and applying for opportunities that interest them. Getting it wrong can seriously damage an individual's wellbeing and reputation.

March, Stanbury and Reynolds write about innovative website design at the Centre for Career Management Skills (CCMS) at the University of Reading. They show the potential of different types of websites designed as learning tools to enhance the career learning and development of students.

Sampson, Shy, Offer and Dozier provide an analysis of the design and use of information and communication technology in career guidance from 1990 to 2009. Literature reviews are very helpful in highlighting progress (and lack of it) in professional practice as well as pointing up gaps in the evidence base which policy-makers need to act on by commissioning future research. We have clearly made progress in our use of ICT in guidance in the last twenty years, but, as the authors point out, we are still failing to achieve the potential of this new medium in our work.

Barnes, La Gro and Watts report on the achievements of the two-year ICT Skills 2 project funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme of the Education and Cultural DG of the European Union. The aim of this project was to develop a framework of professional learning outcomes or competencies that practitioners need in order to use ICT effectively in their work; and to pilot a training needs analysis, practitioner profile and training programme using a mix of e-learning and face-to-face methods. With the setting up of the Career Profession Task Force in England in January 2010, it is particularly timely to have evidence from the project which might be presented to the Task Force of the kind of professional development needs that careers professionals will have as the use of ICT in their work expands in the future.

Watts discusses policy issues relating to the use of ICT in lifelong guidance in a paper which he presented to the Sixth European Conference on e-Guidance, as part of a common plenary session with a Plenary Meeting of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network, held at Riga, Latvia, on 17 September 2009. He concludes that the potential of ICT to act as an agent of transformational change is greater than ever before and if the concept of lifelong guidance is to be converted into effective practice through public policy, ICT has a pivotal role to play.

The Pugh and Sadler report on the development of a new post-graduate qualification in career guidance and development in Scotland is particularly timely. They outline the structure of the qualification and its important features, especially the use of blended learning, employer engagement and the role of the practice tutor.

Rakovska charts the rapid progress that has been made in Bulgaria in the last five years to establish a career counselling profession. Many will recognise the challenge of improving the transition from education to the labour market, especially for young people, in the current global economic climate.

Weber explains the development of a competence-based Masters programme for counsellors by Professor Schiersmann and her team at the University of Heidelberg. He elaborates on the scientific concept and framework that underpins the Masters programme, the counselling competences that they have developed and the structure and delivery of the modules of the MA.

Watts, in a paper written for Careers England, cites international evidence to urge caution on the implementation of the Milburn proposals for funding careers services for young people. In January 2010, the Government published *Unleashing Aspiration*, its response to Milburn, deferring action on the restructuring of careers services for young people. Effectively, the Government has put Connexions services (and Local Authorities) on notice to improve their record.

Anthony Barnes, *Guest Editor*