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# Overview of this issue

Welcome to the April 17 issue of the NICEC journal. The articles below were contributed in response to an open call for papers. It is a pleasure to report that innovative, creative and engaging scholarship is clearly thriving in our field.

**B. Grace Meadows** gets us off to a flying start with a critical perspective on the evolution of Irish manpower and welfare policy. A virtual duoethnographic enquiry is used to offer an alternative discourse to a dominant narrative of undeserving citizens who are responsible for their own unemployment. It is presented in the format of a dialogue between two fictional Dublin characters.

The second article from **John Gough** offers us a new story concerning the professional identity for career guidance practitioners. It uses grounded theory to explore the nature and extent of a common professional identity of careers guidance practitioners in England in the wake of rapid policy change. This article challenges dominant views about pessimistic or demotivated profession(s).

**Tristram Hooley** provides a timely take on Brexit and the implications for career guidance in the UK. It is argued that development of the EU since Maastricht has resulted in substantial shifts in the opportunity structure and that Brexit can be seen as a consequence of the failure of the neoliberal approach taken by the EU to guarantee career development for all.

**Michael Tomlinson, Hazel McCafferty, Helen Fuge** and **Kathryn Wood** present a new perspective on graduate employability based on a graduate capital model. Capitals are defined as key resources that potentially empower graduates and equip them for managing the transition from HE to the labour market. The article considers the practical side and makes suggestions for practitioners who help students and graduates during and beyond higher education.

**Susan Meldrum** calls for delivery models which encourage the collective career learning of groups to be brought to the centre stage of career guidance

practice. Her article challenges the long term focus of the sector on the one-to-one guidance interview and considers why group work is seen as a support activity for the majority of practitioners. A group integrative narrative approach (GINA) is introduced as a model of small group work.

Following this, **Rachel Roberts, Laura Brammar** and **Fiona Cobb** focus on experiential work-based learning as a social mobility mechanism for widening participation students. They evaluate a project that involved facilitating teams of students from low-income backgrounds to conduct mini-consultancy projects with local businesses. Students responded positively and increases in employability-related self-efficacy scores were identified.

Our penultimate article by **Yasuhiro Kotera** and **David Sheffield** is devoted to the use of the 'Disney strategy' with Japanese university students. This tool enables students to approach career decisions in contrasting ways. A mixed methods pilot study reports significant increases in self-esteem and job-search self-efficacy.

Lastly, **Ananda Geluk** addresses a vital but neglected topic with a meditation on motherhood and career development. This article uses a heuristic inquiry approach, relying on an autoethnographic study of her own embodied experience of negotiating the competing demands of motherhood and career, complemented by narrative interviews with other mothers. It discusses the experience of negotiating multiple identities as mother, learner and careers practitioner. A central theme of this study is the importance of a robust, multifaceted self-concept and its significance in relation to increased personal resilience.

We are also grateful to **Gill Frigerio** for providing a topical and thought-provoking book review of *Graduate Employability in Context: Theory, Research and Debate* edited by Michael Tomlinson and Leonard Holmes.

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Phil McCash, Editor

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