NICEC
NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CAREER EDUCATION AND COUNSELLING

CDI CAREER DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Published in partnership with the CDI

ISSN 2046-1348

JOURNAL OF THE
National Institute for Career Education and Counselling

April 2014 | Issue 32

Promoting research and reflective practice in career development

NICEC

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CAREER EDUCATION AND COUNSELLING

NICEC STATEMENT

The Fellows of NICEC agreed the following statement in 2010.

'The National Institute for Career Education and Counselling (NICEC) was originally founded as a research institute in 1975. It now plays the role of a learned society for reflective practitioners in the broad field of career education, career guidance/counselling and career development. This includes individuals whose primary role relates to research, policy, consultancy, scholarship, service delivery or management. NICEC seeks to foster dialogue and innovation between these areas through events, networking, publications and projects.

NICEC is distinctive as a boundary-crossing network devoted to career education and counselling in education, in the workplace, and in the wider community. It seeks to integrate theory and practice in career development, stimulate intellectual diversity and encourage transdisciplinary dialogue. Through these activities, NICEC aims to develop research, inform policy and enhance service delivery.

Membership and fellowship are committed to serious thinking and innovation in career development work. Membership is open to all individuals and organisations connected with career education and counselling. Fellowship is an honour conferred by peer election and signals distinctive contribution to the field and commitment to the development of NICEC's work. Members and Fellows receive the NICEC journal and are invited to participate in all NICEC events.

NICEC does not operate as a professional association or commercial research institute, nor is it organisationally aligned with any specific institution. Although based in the UK, there is a strong international dimension to the work of NICEC and it seeks to support reflective practice in career education and counselling globally.'

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TITLE

The official title of the journal for citation purposes is *Journal of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling* and the ISSN number is ISSN 2046-1348.

It is widely and informally referred to as 'the NICEC journal'.

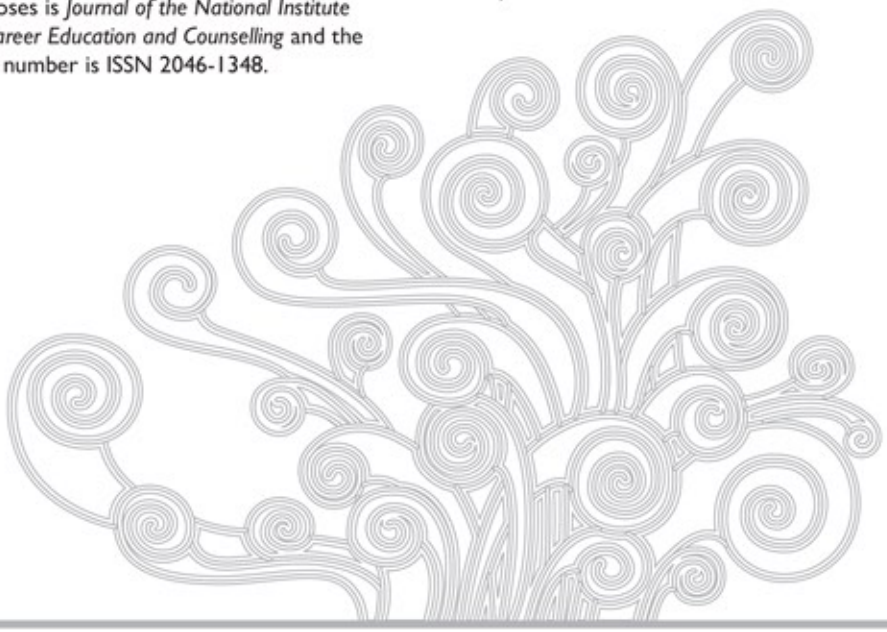
Its former title was *Career Research and Development: the NICEC Journal*, ISSN 1472-6564, published by CRAC, and the final edition under this title was issue 25. To avoid confusion we have retained the numbering of editions used under the previous title.

AIMS AND SCOPE

The NICEC journal publishes articles on the broad theme of career development in any context including:

- Career development in the workplace: private and public sector, small, medium and large organisations, private practitioners.
- Career development in education: schools, colleges, universities, adult education, public career services.
- Career development in the community: third age, voluntary, charity, social organisations, independent contexts, public career services.

It is designed to be read by individuals who are involved in career development-related work in a wide range of settings including information, advice, counselling, guidance, advocacy, coaching, mentoring, psychotherapy, education, teaching, training, scholarship, research, consultancy, human resources, management or policy. The journal has a national and international readership.



Printed by Lanes (South East) Ltd., Broadstairs. 01843 861314.

JOURNAL OF THE

National Institute for Career Education and Counselling

April 2014, Issue 32

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GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Manuscripts are welcomed focusing on any form of scholarship that can be related to the NICEC Statement. This could include, but is not confined to, papers focused on policy, theory-building, professional ethics, values, reflexivity, innovative practice, management issues and/or empirical research. Articles for the journal should be accessible and stimulating to an interested and wide readership across all areas of career development work. Innovative, analytical and/or evaluative contributions from both experienced contributors and first-time writers are welcomed. Main articles should normally be 3,000 to 3,500 words in length and should be submitted to one of the co-editors by email. Articles longer than 3,500 words can also be accepted by agreement. Shorter papers, opinion pieces or letters are also welcomed for the occasional 'debate' section. Please contact either Phil McCash or Hazel Reid prior to submission to discuss the appropriateness of the proposed article and to receive a copy of the NICEC style guidelines. Final decisions on inclusion are made following full manuscript submission and a process of open peer review.

SUBSCRIPTION AND MEMBERSHIP

The journal is published twice a year (cover price £20/issue) and can be purchased via an annual subscription (£35 UK or £50 overseas, including postage).

Membership of NICEC is also open to any individual with an interest in career development (£100 per annum). Members receive the journal, free attendance at all NICEC events and access to publications and seminar materials via the NICEC website. Individuals from one organization can share their membership place at events.

For information on journal subscription or membership, please contact Wendy Hirsh: membership@nicec.org

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The *Journal of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling* is published in partnership with the CDI by: National Institute for Career Education and Counselling (NICEC), 1 Croft Road, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1BS.

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The new partnership with CDI and the International Perspectives edition

This edition marks a significant turning point in the history of our Journal as NICEC and the Career Development Institute (CDI) have entered into an agreement relating to its future production and distribution. I would therefore like to start this editorial by welcoming readers old and new and explaining this development in a little more detail. I will then move on to introducing the current edition focused on the theme of international perspectives.

Partnership with the CDI

NICEC is delighted to welcome this exciting and innovative partnership. The Fellows believe that, since the scope of the NICEC Journal is now coterminous with the CDI footprint, it makes sense to develop a strong alliance. The partnership represents an impressive commitment by the CDI to supporting contemporary research and scholarship in our field. Both organisations have long traditions in this area and have pledged to maintain and uphold quality, standards and editorial independence.

The partnership will enable each CDI member to receive a copy of the Journal. As part of this process, we welcome Alison Dixon to the Editorial Board. Alison also edits *Career Matters*, CDI's magazine for the career development sector, and will bring a highly valuable perspective to the Board. There have also been changes to the Journal's front and inside covers as these now incorporate the CDI logo, new straplines and information about CDI. Further joint research events for NICEC and CDI members are also planned.

To help new readers in orientation, the NICEC Journal is distinctive as a scholarly journal devoted wholly to career development work. Each edition contains around eight articles of approximately 3,500 words in length. This enables topics to be explored in reasonable depth whilst maintaining readability and relevance. Manuscripts are subject to a process of peer review prior to acceptance.

Each edition of the Journal tends to have a theme but, within that, space can be made for submissions on any topic relevant to the aims and scope. In the recent past, we have welcomed articles on a variety of subjects including: career coaching; digital technology in careers work; community, place and locality; boundary crossing; and the professional identity of careers workers. We generally seek to cover a number of specialisms and sectors relevant to our work. For example, in this edition there are articles on careers work in other countries, schools, higher education and the statutory sector. The next edition will mark Tony Watts' imminent retirement by celebrating and reflecting on his seminal contribution to our profession. Further themes will be developed as time goes by and, as always, we are open to suggestions from the readership. Linked to this, an important aim of the NICEC Journal is to provide a space for new writing. I would like to encourage all members of CDI and NICEC to consider this.

International perspectives

CDI and NICEC members have long been interested in developments overseas both in terms of influencing provision elsewhere and learning from it. I am therefore delighted to introduce eight articles covering a variety of international topics. In contrasting ways, each paper demonstrates the scope and variety of career development work across the globe and a number of innovative suggestions are proposed for the enhancement of delivery.

Tony Watts presents the main findings from major cross-national reviews of career guidance systems and policies. He discusses nine key lessons learnt from this process. For example, the importance of combining all-age career guidance services, as found in New Zealand, Scotland and Wales, alongside embedded careers

support in schools, workplaces and elsewhere.

Peter Plant and **Helene Valgreen** analyse the policy focus on careers work in Europe and suggest that it has been harnessed to other policy areas such as employment, gender equality and economic development. They argue that this can lead to careers work as an instrument of social control as opposed to an instrument for emancipation and empowerment.

Nicki Moore, Mirjana Zećirević and Simon Peters report on the development of lifelong career guidance provision in Croatia. They chart the movement towards three levels of services: self-help services, brief assisted services and individual case-managed services; and discusses the importance of marketing, local partnerships and comprehensive online resources.

Jo Hutchinson compares English and German approaches to career-related learning in relation to science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM). A number of innovative examples are selected and analysed with a particular focus on two large-scale German initiatives: Go-MINT and Girls' Day.

Jonathan Young explores the perceptions of young people at an international school in Belgium using photo-elicitation methods and semi-structured interviews. From this, he develops a range of recommendations including the development of internationally-minded interpersonal qualities and skills.

We then move to the higher education sector and three contrasting international case studies: an institutional case study; a career education case study and a management case study. Each paper contains ideas that could potentially be transferred within higher education and indeed more widely within the career development sector.

Rachel Coombes explores support for international students within UK higher education. She uncovers several relatively low-cost areas of creative practice including the development of country profiles and inter-university links using Skype.

Kathleen Houston reports on the development of an international career education programme. This consists of 14 workshops covering a range of topics including business culture and work experience. Initial findings, she suggests, indicate students are successfully learning key concepts in relation to global employability.

Siobhan Neary, Nalayini Thambar and **Sharon Bell** discuss the challenges and opportunities involved in managing career support services across university campuses based in the UK, China and Malaysia. They propose a cyclical management model consisting of: mapping connections; mapping activity; strengthening exchange; and embedding practice.

Phil McCash, Editor

Cross-national reviews of career guidance systems: Overview and reflections

A. G. Watts

This article presents the main findings from a major series of cross-national reviews of lifelong career guidance systems and policies conducted between 2001 and 2010. While there were some precursors, these reviews represent the most extensive international database ever assembled on such systems. The extent and nature of the reviews are outlined, with some comments on their methodology. Some of the main lessons from the reviews are summarised, and their impact is assessed.

Precursors

Prior to 2001, a number of cross-national studies of career guidance systems had been produced by various international organisations, especially within Europe.

In 1966, the European Commission committed to publishing a regular report on 'the function of vocational guidance, its progress and experience gained' (OJ No.154, 24/8/66). Such reports were published in 1967, 1968, 1969, 1971 and 1975 (e.g. CEC, 1975). Each consisted in the main of separate statements by respective government authorities in each member-state, presented in a common format but with little attempt at comparative evaluation or synthesis. Subsequently, further reports were commissioned from independent experts. The first, by Walter Jaide (Germany), covered the period from 1975 to 1980; the second, by Jean Drevillon (France), from 1975 to 1983 (Drevillon, 1985).

From the mid-1980s, however, a series of comparative reviews were carried out, with a more strongly analytical approach. These comprised a review of services for young people covering the then ten member-states (Watts, Dartois & Plant, 1987); an extension of this review to include the new member-states of Portugal and Spain (Watts, Dartois & Plant, 1988); and a subsequent review of all-age services (Watts, Guichard, Plant & Rodriguez, 1994). They were complemented by more specific studies of guidance services for adults (Köditz, 1989), of transnational guidance activities (Plant, 1990), of the occupational profiles of vocational counsellors (Watts, 1992), of career guidance services for disadvantaged young people (Chisholm, 1994) and of guidance and counselling services in higher education (Watts & Van Esbroeck, 1998). Most of these studies included country studies that were published alongside the synthesis reports.

Alongside these European studies, a number of more widely-spread reviews of career guidance systems were produced by other international organisations. For example, UNESCO commissioned a six-country study of the relationship between guidance and the school curriculum that included Brazil, India, Kenya and Malaysia (Watts & Ferreira Marques, 1978); while OECD carried out a seven-country study of career guidance for young people that included Canada, Japan and Mexico (OECD/CERI, 1996).

Most of these studies were confined to particular age-groups and/or sectors and/or themes. Only the 1994 EU study (Watts, Guichard, Plant & Rodriguez, 1994) was a true precursor, in the sense that it covered all career guidance services within the countries reviewed, on an all-age basis.

The reviews

The much more substantial series of cross-national reviews conducted between 2001 and 2010 were carried out by a number of influential international organisations. They can be described as comprising four overlapping phases, with three annexes.

The first phase was the Career Guidance Policy Review carried out by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. OECD is based in Paris, and includes most of the wealthier countries in the world. It is widely respected for the intellectual quality of its work, much of which has a strong base in economics. One of its activities is to conduct cross-national reviews in a wide range of policy areas, to which its member countries can opt in. These reviews enable the participating countries to benchmark their progress in the relevant policy area against other comparable countries, and to share good practice, promoting their successes and learning from practices elsewhere.

OECD's agenda is set by its member countries, so the fact that the Career Guidance Policy Review took place is itself significant. OECD had paid some attention to career guidance issues previously, but mainly as part of examining policy issues relating to initial transitions from school to work (OECD/CERI, 1996; OECD, 2000). The review conducted in 2001-02 was the first occasion on which it had launched a full formal policy review devoted specifically to career guidance issues, and the first occasion on which it had looked at such issues on a lifelong basis. The review was endorsed by both the OECD Education Committee and its Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Committee: their joint support was linked to the lifelong learning and active labour market policy objectives then being pursued more broadly by OECD. Fourteen countries took part: 11 European countries, plus Australia, Canada and Korea.

The review process adopted by OECD included completion of a questionnaire, followed (except in the case of Finland) by a country visit of a week or a little more. This resulted in what in OECD parlance is referred to as a Country Note, containing an analysis of the guidance system and its strengths and weaknesses, plus some recommendations for improvement. Each of these visits was carried out by a member of the OECD team (Richard Sweet or myself), plus an expert from another country. A number of thematic papers were also commissioned. Based on this extensive data, a synthesis report was then prepared and published (OECD, 2004).

As the second phase, the World Bank decided to use an adapted form of the OECD process to conduct a parallel review in 7 middle-income countries: Chile, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia, South Africa and Turkey. Here an expert was commissioned to produce a draft report based on the structure of the OECD questionnaire. One of the World Bank team (David Fretwell or myself) then visited the country for a week, following which we rewrote the country report in collaboration with the national expert, and then synthesised the results (Watts & Fretwell, 2004).

Thirdly, the European Commission, as part of its policy work on lifelong learning, decided to use the OECD questionnaire to collect information through its agencies the European Training Foundation (ETF) and Cedefop respectively to enable it to report first on the 11 'acceding and candidate countries' of the time (Sultana, 2003) and then to cover the 29 countries that were members either of the European Union or of the European Economic Area (Sultana, 2004). These reviews were based on questionnaire data alone, except in the case of those countries that had been involved in the OECD or World Bank reviews. In other words, there was no visit process.

At this point, a 'megasynthesis' was prepared on the 37 countries covered in these three studies (Watts & Sultana, 2004). This was used as the core document for a major conference held in October 2003 by OECD and the Canadian Government in Toronto, Canada, in association with the European Commission, the World Bank and the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance.

Subsequently, as a fourth phase, two further reviews were conducted by ETF, which has responsibility for linking EU policies and programmes with candidate countries and with other neighbouring countries. Both were carried out in regions experiencing high levels of political turbulence and conflict.

One was the Western Balkans, covering seven countries: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia,

Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. This included questionnaire responses prepared internally within each country, followed by visits from the ETF co-ordinator (Helmut Zelloth) and one other international expert, but no formal Country Note. A synthesis report was prepared (Sweet, 2006) but not formally published.

The other was the Mediterranean region, covering ten countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine (West Bank and Gaza Strip), Syria, Tunisia and Turkey. This included only two country visits, but also two meetings of the national experts who were responsible for preparing the country reports, plus strong editing of these reports. Particular attention was paid to the distinctive socio-cultural contexts of the participating countries, and the extent to which these required adaptation of career guidance concepts drawn largely from Western practice. The resulting synthesis report (Sultana & Watts, 2007; 2008) paid stronger attention to these issues than the earlier reports in the series.

Finally, there were three annexes to the series, two of which focused primarily on particular services. The first was a study undertaken for the European Commission of career guidance in Europe's public employment services (Sultana & Watts, 2006a; 2006b). This covered a questionnaire survey of 28 countries (including Switzerland, which had not been covered in the other European studies) plus visits to seven. This study was significant because the relationship between career guidance and public employment services is often complex and contested, but crucial to the design of lifelong guidance systems.

Second, I carried out three further single-country reviews which drew heavily from the OECD review but differed from the others in a number of key respects. All were in countries which had an all-age career guidance service: New Zealand, Scotland and Wales. In each case I was commissioned to conduct a review of the service, against the benchmarks provided by the OECD review. My reports (Watts, 2005; 2007; 2009a) thus focused on one particular service, but paid detailed attention to its relationship with other career guidance providers within the country concerned. Since the model provided by an all-age service of this kind was one of the strongest identified in the OECD review, but was exemplified there by a single example (Wales), these reports represented significant additions to the evidence base. A summary paper (Watts, 2010a) synthesised their main findings.

Finally, in 2010, I conducted a similar review using the OECD benchmarks of the lifelong guidance system that had been developed in Hungary with the aid of major funding from the European Social Fund (Watts & Borbély-Pecze, 2011). The review concluded that this represented one of the most systematic efforts in any country to implement the principles outlined by OECD and the EU, drawing upon the previous reviews. An important issue identified by the review was the sustainability of donor-funded work: major difficulties have subsequently been experienced in Hungary in this respect. Nonetheless, this review provided a valuable case-study of what can be achieved with a systematic approach which is not based ab initio on an all-age service.

Bearing in mind the overlaps between these studies, the reviews have in total covered 55 countries (see Annex). More recently, the ETF has extended elements of them further, into some of the former Soviet countries (e.g. Georgia, Ukraine) (Zelloth, 2009). Meanwhile, the existing reviews represent the most extensive database ever developed on national career guidance systems and policies across the world. There are important gaps, including the three countries with the largest populations in the world: China, India and the USA. Moreover, much of Asia, Africa and South America are thinly represented. Nonetheless, it represents a very substantial achievement. In addition, the reviews have been used as data sources for two handbooks for policy-makers: one published jointly by OECD and the European Commission (2004); the other – addressed particularly to low- and middle-income countries – by the International Labour Organisation (2006).

Methodology

The methodology adopted for the reviews was broadly similar, but – as already indicated – with some variations. In principle, there were four stages: questionnaire; visit; country report; and synthesis report.

The *questionnaire* adopted for the OECD review was used as the basis for all the subsequent reviews. It was very detailed: some responses were up to a hundred pages long. The OECD version was designed to be completed by participating governments, but most contracted out its completion to external consultants. In the case of the World Bank review, the World Bank contracted directly with a consultant, who thereafter took part in the visit and co-authored the country report. With the reviews that included visits, other sources were also scrutinised in advance; with the single-country 'annexes' to the series, the delivery in advance of large boxes of relevant documents effectively replaced the questionnaire.

The *visits* were, in my view, a crucial part of the process. I took part in 23 of the 43 country visits conducted as part of the reviews (as already noted, some did not involve visits). In the case of the OECD review, the review team comprised either Richard Sweet or myself, plus an invited expert from another country; in the case of the World Bank review, it comprised either David Fretwell or myself, plus the internal consultant from the country being visited. The visits typically lasted a week (Australia and Canada were a little longer, because of the complexities of devolution and the time required for internal travel), and involved meetings with policy-makers, with researchers and with practitioners, plus first-hand visits to some services (where we usually tried to include a group discussion with 'clients'). The process was essentially one of triangulation: asking probing questions (based largely on the preceding documentary evidence), and then weighing the extent to which the answers from different informants supported or contradicted each other plus other evidence. The final meeting was usually with senior policy-makers, providing an opportunity to present draft recommendations orally and receive feedback before committing them to paper.

The *country report* was essentially linked to the visit, and was only produced in countries that had been visited. Drafts were always sent to the host country for comment, particularly on factual inaccuracies. In the case of the OECD review, the fact that the report was co-authored by brief visitors, with the imprimatur of OECD, meant that it had a certain status as an external view of the country's provision: effectively holding up a mirror though which the country could view its career guidance provision as a whole, as seen through the bird's-eye lens of informed external observers. In the case of the World Bank, the report had less status, unless it was perceived to be a potential influence on future donor possibilities; on the other hand, the fact that it was effectively a co-authored redraft of the initial consultancy report made it easier and quicker to complete, and produced a sense of co-ownership between internal and external perspectives.

The final stage, the *synthesis report,* involved an analytical process in which the evidence from different countries was analysed in relation to a standard framework, enabling generalisations to be drawn and different models to be identified and contrasted. In the case of the OECD review, the framework was produced in collaboration with an advisory group including representatives of all the participating countries. This was then used by Ronald Sultana as the model for the subsequent EU report (Sultana, 2004), to enable links to be readily established between the two documents. The other synthesis reports adopted somewhat different frameworks adapted to their distinctive contexts.

Key lessons

What were the main lessons from the reviews? An initial analysis was included in the 37-country 'megasynthesis' (Watts & Sultana, 2004). This section seeks to update this analysis.

1 First, the definition of career guidance adopted for the reviews was very similar. It covered services intended to assist individuals, of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. These might include services in schools, in universities and colleges, in training institutions, in public employment services, in companies, in the voluntary/community sector and in the private sector. The services might be on an individual or group basis; they might be face-to-face or at a distance (including helplines and web-based services). They included career information (in print, ICT-based and other forms), assessment and self-assessment tools, counselling interviews, career education and career

management programmes, taster programmes, work search programmes, and transition services. This definition, partly because of its OECD endorsement, has subsequently been widely adopted both within countries and internationally.

2 Second, the reviews were based on viewing this range of services as a coherent system. In reality, of course, they are not a single system. Rather, they are a collection of disparate sub-systems, most of which are a minor part of some wider system, with its own rationale and driving forces, some of which can limit or distort the nature of what is offered. But in the reviews these different parts were brought together, and viewed as parts of a whole. The implicit underlying principle was that, from the lifelong perspective of the individual, they should be as seamless as possible.

3 Third, the nature of what is offered is strongly influenced by the political structure of the country, by its level of economic development, and by socio-cultural factors (Watts, 1996b). The dynamics are, for example, very different in countries which are strongly centralised from those where important administrative powers are devolved to regions, states or provinces; in post-industrial economies from less developed economies; in countries where western values predominate from those with different value systems; in countries with extensive and well-developed guidance services to others with few if any such services. For instance, in Arabic countries there is no word equivalent to 'career' or 'career guidance'; family influences and patronage tend to be very powerful (which can reinforce social inequities but can also mitigate job loss and facilitate the search for new employment); and there are cultural tendencies towards directiveness and towards fatalism (Sultana & Watts, 2007; 2008). While the pressures of globalisation produce pressures towards homogenisation, it is very important that careful account is taken of such factors in designing appropriate services (see Sultana, 2009; 2011).

4 Fourth, the reviews focused particularly on the interface between career guidance and public policy. Since in all countries most services are publicly funded and free to the user, they are effectively dependent on public policy. The fundamental underlying argument is that they represent a public good as well as a private good. The public-policy goals which policy-makers expect career guidance services to address fall into three main categories. The first are *learning* goals, including improving the efficiency of the education and training system and managing its interface with the labour market. The second are *labour market* goals, including improving the match between supply and demand and managing adjustments to change. The third are *social equity* goals, including supporting equal opportunities and promoting social inclusion. These goals have been reframed in the light of policies relating to lifelong learning, linked to active labour market policies and the concept of sustaining employability. The result is that countries have increasingly begun to recognised the need to expand access to career guidance so that – in principle, at least – it is available not just to selected groups like school-leavers and the unemployed, but to everyone throughout their lives, as epitomised in the EU concept of 'lifelong guidance' (ELGPN, 2010; 2012). This is supported by OECD work on human capital (OECD, 2002) which suggests that the career management skills which are now a growing focus of career guidance policies and practices may play an important role in economic growth.

5 Fifth, while governments have an interest in the provision of services to all on a lifelong basis, this does not necessarily mean that they should pay for all such services. In most countries, services for young people and for unemployed adults are publicly provided. But for employed adults this is not necessarily the case. Some may be provided by their employers, though this is likely to be patchy and unlikely to be wholly impartial. Others may be left to the market, usually financed by employers (especially in the case of outplacement counselling) or – more rarely – by the individual. If career guidance is viewed as a public as well as a private good, the roles of government in relation to a mixed-economy model of provision can be defined as being three-fold: to compensate for market failure by addressing needs which the market cannot meet, where this is viewed as being in the public interest; but also to stimulate the market (through contracts, incentives or social marketing) in order to build its capacity; and to ensure that it is quality-assured, both to protect the public interest and to build consumer confidence.

6 Sixth, the reviews demonstrate that no country has yet developed an adequate lifelong career guidance system. But most countries have examples of good practice, and across the range of countries these indicate what such a system might look like – recognising that in terms of its detail it will take different forms in different countries. My own view, based on my involvement in these reviews, is that the strongest model is that built around an all-age career guidance service, as in New Zealand, Scotland and Wales. The only one of these covered in the original OECD review was Wales, but the review commented on the organisational and resource-use advantages of providing a range of services throughout the lifespan within a single organisational framework dedicated wholly and specifically to career guidance provision (OECD, 2004, p.144). My reviews in New Zealand, Scotland and Wales strongly reinforced these conclusions. In all three cases, the all-age services emerged very strongly in relation to the benchmarks provided by the OECD review. In effect, an all-age service of this kind provides a strong professional spine for a lifelong guidance system. So long as it recognises that it cannot provide all the career guidance that it needed, and devotes significant attention to supporting embedded career guidance support in schools, workplaces, and elsewhere, it provides a particularly robust base for a lifelong career guidance system (Watts, 2010a).

7 Seventh, there is a need for strong co-ordination and leadership mechanisms in order to articulate a vision and develop a strategy for delivering lifelong access to guidance. This is the case even where there is an all-age service, but even more where there is not (e.g. Hungary – see Watts & Borbély-Pecze, 2011). Such mechanisms are required within government, where responsibility for guidance services is often fragmented across a number of ministries and branches. Co-ordination mechanisms are also needed more broadly at national level, to bring together the relevant stakeholder groups and the various guidance professional bodies (which in some countries are very fragmented). Parallel mechanisms are then required at regional and/or local levels, closer to the point of delivery. In some countries, seminars set up for the OECD and World Bank reviews provided an unusual opportunity for the relevant groups to come together, and led to proposals to develop a more sustainable infrastructure for joint action. Subsequently, the European Commission encouraged member-states to establish national lifelong guidance forums, and almost all European countries have done so, building on the experience of countries like Denmark and the UK which had such forums in the past. A manual published by Cedefop (2008a) drew from the experience to date and outlined some of the issues that needed to be addressed in establishing and sustaining these mechanisms. Continuing support has been provided by the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (see ELGPN, 2010; 2012).

8 Eighth, an important focus for such collaborative action is the development of strategic instruments which can be operationally useful across the whole range of the career guidance field and hold it together. One is competence frameworks for career guidance practitioners of the kind developed in Canada. Another is organisational quality standards of the kind developed in the UK, covering how individuals are helped and how services are managed: these can be voluntary in nature, but can also be made mandatory for organisations in receipt of public funding. A third type of instrument, developed in Canada and subsequently also in Australia, drawing from earlier work in the USA, is the Blueprint of competencies which career education and guidance programmes aim to develop among clients at different stages of their lives, with accompanying performance indicators (for a recent cross-country analysis, see Hooley, Watts, Sultana & Neary, 2013). Together, these three instruments can help to harmonise a lifelong guidance system, particularly if they can be linked to common branding and marketing of services.

9 Ninth, the issue of marketing is being given greater recognition. In the EU, a Resolution of the Council of Education Ministers on guidance, passed in 2004, stated that: 'Services need to be available at times and in forms which will encourage all citizens to continue to develop their skills and competences throughout their lives, linked to changing needs in the labour market.' It added: 'Such services need to be viewed as an active tool, and individuals should be positively encouraged to use them.' If this important statement is to be followed through, careful attention needs to be paid to how to market the services, including how to brand them. In the UK, the

Learndirect helpline, established in 1998, took around one million calls annually in its early years, while its website attracted many million web sessions. Usage was stimulated by a marketing campaign, including prime-time advertising on television, which was in effect a form of publicly-funded social marketing, encouraging people to consider change in their lives and advancing their careers (Watts & Dent, 2008). My review of the New Zealand all-age service (Watts, 2007) indicated that the level of take-up of the New Zealand helpline had been under a quarter of that for Learndirect. This seemed clearly related to the level of brand recognition among the general public, which had been around 30% for Career Services, in contrast to figures of over 80% for Learndirect. Such differences in turn seemed linked to the size of marketing budgets: the Learndirect marketing budget as a percentage of total turnover (its budget had been set at one-third of total advice turnover) was nearly five times larger than that in New Zealand. I mention this specific example partly because of its intrinsic interest, but partly because it demonstrates in a simple and concrete way the benefits of international comparisons.

Impact

The direct impact of the country review process depends a great deal on the willingness and capacity of the relevant policy-makers to learn and to change. It may also be helped by the authority of the external organisation. OECD, in particular, tends to be widely respected and its views to carry some weight. In the end, however, it can achieve little unless there is a will for change within the country itself. Where there is such a will, the review can help to reinforce and to some extent to channel it. In the countries for which I was responsible, my sense was that the OECD review had considerable impact in Denmark, where it helped to shape subsequent legislation, and in Australia, where it contributed to a significant raising of the profile of career guidance, reflected in a range of subsequent initiatives; in the Netherlands and UK, on the other hand, it had little visible impact. In the World Bank study, the reviews had greater impact where there was a development programme funded by the Bank to which they were linked (Romania and Turkey). In the ETF studies, the impact was linked to the extent of follow-up work by ETF staff, sometimes linked to donor-supported activities: in some cases these were substantial, including a number of countries where few formal guidance services had existed previously (see Zelloth, 2009). In all cases, the reviews – and particularly the country reports – had the potential to foster informed strategic debate within the countries concerned.

More broadly, the studies had impact on the adoption by the EU Council of Education Ministers of its 2004 Resolution on lifelong guidance (Resolution 9286/04 EDUC 109 SOC 234, 18 May 2004): this referred to the reviews as showing that 'in many countries, policies, systems and practices for guidance in Europe do not match the demands of knowledge-based economies and societies', and as calling 'for a reform of policies and a rethinking of practices in this area'. The studies subsequently influenced the formation of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN, 2010; 2012; see also Watts, Sultana & McCarthy, 2010) and in particular the identification of the four policy themes which have provided the framework for its work: career management skills; access; quality and evidence; and co-operation and co-ordination. These themes have also provided the framework for European lifelong guidance policy reviews by Cedefop (2008b; 2011), though the fact that these reviews were based solely on existing data sources (including more broadly-based Cedefop questionnaires) has limited their quality.

Alongside this, the studies have helped to ensure that career guidance is now more integrated into the general work of OECD, most notably in its reviews on vocational education and training (OECD, 2010; Watts, 2009b; 2010b), and also of other bodies like Cedefop, ETF and international donor organisations.

The studies also influenced the series of International Symposia on Career Development and Public Policy which have taken place biennially in recent years, co-ordinated through the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy (ICCDPP). The first two of these – in Canada in 1999 (Hiebert & Bezanson, 2000) and 2001 – preceded the studies and to a significant extent helped to pave the way for them, by building the relationships between the OECD, the European Commission and the World Bank (all

represented at the 2001 symposium) which provided the basis for the series.

Alongside these developments there has grown a critical literature examining lifelong guidance policy contexts from a Foucauldian perspective as part of a neoliberal policy narrative (Bengtsson, 2011; Darmon & Perez, 2010) – a somewhat limited perspective, excluding other possible political-philosophical positions (Watts, 1996a). More subtly and constructively, Ronald Sultana – who has worked with me on many of these studies – has explored some of the ethical dilemmas of such work, which effectively involves operating as a 'boundary person' between global and local influences (Sultana, 2009; 2011).

It is important that these reviews are not considered a one-off exercise. The descriptive data in the reports is now somewhat out-of-date. If they are to have a sustained impact, they need to be repeated every decade or so, to be extended to other geographical areas and other countries not covered to date, and preferably to include the country visits which are so crucial to their quality. The existence of such bodies as ELGPN and ICCDPP could facilitate the formation of review teams for such visits, linked to country-to-country peer learning and other developmental processes. This would also provide an opportunity to evaluate in more depth the impact of the studies reviewed here.

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Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to David Fretwell, John McCarthy, Ronald Sultana, Richard Sweet and Helmut Zelloth for their helpful comments on drafts of this article.

Annex: Participating countries

Country	OECD	World Bank	EC	ETF	Other
Albania				2	
Algeria					
Australia	x			3	
Austria	x		x		a
Belgium			x		a
Bosnia-Herzegovina				2	
Bulgaria			x	1	
Canada	x				
Chile		x			
Croatia				2	
Cyprus			x	1	a
Czech Republic	x		x		a
Denmark	x		x		a
Egypt				3	
Estonia			x	1	a
Finland	x		x		a
France			x		a
Germany	x		x		a
Greece			x		a
Hungary			x	1	a; b
Iceland			x		a
Ireland	x		x		a
Israel				3	
Italy			x		a
Jordan				3	
Korea	x				
Kosovo				2	
Latvia			x	1	a
Lebanon				3	
Lithuania			x	1	a
Luxembourg	x		x		a
Macedonia (Former Yugoslav Republic of)				2	
Malta			x	1	a
Montenegro				2	
Morocco				3	
Netherlands	x		x		a
New Zealand					b
Norway	x		x		a
Palestine (West Bank and Gaza Strip)				3	
Philippines		x			
Poland		x	x	1	a
Portugal			x		a
Romania		x	x	1	
Russia		x			
Serbia				2	
Slovakia			x	1	a
Slovenia			x	1	a
South Africa		x			
Spain			x		a
Sweden			x		a
Switzerland					a
Syria				3	
Tunisia				3	
Turkey		x		3	
United Kingdom			x		a; b*

*(Scotland, Wales)

In the ETF column, '1' refers to the review of EU acceding and candidate countries (Sultana, 2003), '2' to the review of the Western Balkans (Sweet, 2006), and '3' to the review of the MEDA region (Sultana & Watts, 2007; 2008).

In the 'Other' column, 'a' refers to the review of career guidance in Europe's public employment services (Sultana & Watts, 2006a; 2006b); 'b' to single-country reviews of all-age career guidance services (Watts, 2005; 2007; 2009a; Watts & Borbély-Pecze, 2011).

The flip side: Career guidance policies and social control

Peter Plant and Helene Valgreen

Career guidance in most European countries is increasingly an area of policy interest. Not so much with a focus on guidance itself, but more preoccupied with other policy areas in which career guidance may have a role to play: employment, education, social inclusion, gender equality, and economic development, just to mention a few. This mirrors a strong policy focus on the role of guidance as a soft societal steering instrument. This poses dilemmas in relation to the delicate balance between guidance as an instrument for personal development, and guidance as social control.

Introduction

According to the 2004 EU Resolution on Lifelong Guidance, which has been adopted by EU member states, guidance refers to:

> A range of activities that enables citizens of any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these capacities and competences are learned and/or used. (EU, 2004)

In this Resolution, guidance activities include: information and advice giving, counselling, competence assessment, mentoring, advocacy, teaching decision-making, and career management skills.

> There is a clear consensus in Europe that high quality guidance and counselling services play a key role in supporting lifelong learning, career management and achievement of personal goals. (CEDEFOP, 2009, p. 1)

This consensus has had a significant impact on policy-making and practice in this area, as policy efforts and increased resources, over the last decade, have been focused on establishing a coherent system for guidance and counselling for young people. Adult guidance is still somewhat fragmented in most European countries. Thus, educational/vocational/career guidance has attracted increasing political attention over the past few years. This has had positive effects in terms of e.g. professionalisation of guidance in most European countries (CEDEFOP, 2009). But this policy focus also has a darker side which has had less attention: social control aspects have occurred as a result of this process, as discussed by Plant & Thomsen (2012). It is to these issues that we now turn, with some examples from our home country, Denmark.

Obligation

The etymological meaning of the Danish word 'vejledning' is 'leading someone on the way'. In 2003, the Act on Guidance established how guidance counsellors should lead young people on the way to what is considered mainstream normality, where participation in social life takes place through work and/or education. This is part of the social contract in a welfare state such as Denmark. In a societal and governmentality perspective, guidance can be viewed as one of the soft steering mechanisms of society: through guidance, people will make choices that will meet the interest of both themselves as individuals, and of the society, i.e. in practice, the labour market. This, however, leaves little room for alternative choices, and the social control aspect is evident, which became abundantly clear in a recent legislative

initiative, known as the Youth Packages from 2010 and onwards, on youth education and employment. They established an obligation to stay in education or work on the basis of both incentives and economic social welfare sanctions directed towards young people. This showed a profound difference in relation to other Nordic countries: whereas Norway and Iceland have established young people's right to education (and guidance), the government (2001-2011) of Denmark chose to establish this as an obligation. Such issues are far from being matters of rhetoric, as there are fundamental differences between holding the right to a good or being obliged to make specific choices at certain points in your life. This places guidance in an intricate social control role (Plant, 2010), policing the borders of societal normalization. Thus, guidance in this picture takes the form of social control, disguised as a helping hand in a velvet glove (Plant & Thomsen, 2012). This is an impasse: it locks guidance to the role of preserving a societal status quo situation, where the opposite is badly needed in the present time of profound economic, social, and ecological changes and challenges. But such social control and status quo policies are disguised under the veil of 'prioritising'.

Prioritising

In some cases, prioritising guidance is taken to its excesses. Again, Denmark is an extreme example. Here, the main target group for youth guidance is youth who have difficulties with choosing or completing education or occupation. The above-mentioned EU Resolution on Lifelong guidance (EU, 2004), however, states that guidance is for all citizens throughout life, with a particular focus on those who are in risk of marginalization. The centrality of the citizen is the focal point. This raises the question of the balance between the two: is guidance for all, or is guidance re reserved for those in a societal risk group? The Danish case tips the balance: 80% of youth need no further/personal guidance, as they can use the internet. This is the official position. But there is a difference between focusing on those with particular guidance needs within the framework of a general guidance offer on the one hand, and, on the other, to select and thus stigmatize a particular societal group, who in practice cannot reject this guidance offer. Moreover, it is still unclear who these people with particular guidance needs might be. The English label NEETs does not cover in this case. Over the last decade they have been labeled weak, marginalised, people with special guidance needs, people with extended guidance needs, in risk of educational drop out, or early school leavers. What all these labels have in common is the stigma (Plant, 2003).

This creates a dilemma: on the one hand is the societal aim of educational retention. This calls for guidance interventions. On the other hand , in focusing so strongly and almost exclusively on this particular target group, guidance may risk to stigmastise the very people they are aiming at helping, thus creating a NEET fence around them by insisting on their position as a minority. This is a classic example of blaming the victims, who in this case are young people with no job or no education. In short, prioritising guidance in this way may have a counter effect (Plant, 2010).

Social justice

Instead of labeling and putting people in little boxes, the real question should be: 'How can guidance develop social justice' (Irving & Malik, 2005). Individual deficits are often in focus when dealing with barriers to education, and the role of guidance in this respect. One current Danish example is the Educations Readiness Appraisal routine, by which youth guidance counsellors categorise youth in terms of such readiness in terms of personal, social, and competence aspects. Interestingly, the readiness of educational institutions to admit young applicants is not assessed. This is a blind spot, and it tends to leave institutional and societal aspects with less focus and attention. Such aspects may, however, be of equal importance, and together these factors may result in societal exclusion and marginalisation of people who leave education for whatever reason (Levitas, 1998). Watts (1999) has three explanations of social exclusion mechanisms, of which barriers to education is one aspect: the economic explanation, the moral one, and one which focuses on lack of cultural capital. The excluded, the drop outs, the early school leavers, the push outs, however, are heterogeneous, not a group. What, if anything, they have in common is their confusion, their frustration, their disillusionment, their low self-esteem and their alienation. Add those who

are disadvantaged by age, sex, class, ethnicity, religious background, employment status, illiteracy, rurality and refugee status.

Laudable as many guidance initiatives may be, they often have a particular focus, both in policy terms and on a practical level, in terms of the emphasis on individual deficits and difficulties. In most cases, the individual, rather than the educational institution, is seen as the problem. This is reflected in the labeling of people who do not take part in formal education or leave educational institutions. They are called Early School Leavers (ESL) in the EU Commission language, or NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) in English speaking countries. One common label is educational Drop Outs. What these individuals have in common is that they do not fit easily into mainstream education. Or perhaps that mainstream education does not fit their needs. The point is the latter sentence, as they may in fact be push-outs, rather than drop outs. How is the problem viewed: that is the question: as an individual problem, or as an institutional/societal problem? 'What is the problem represented to be?' asks Bacchi (2009) in her discourse analysis. This is important, as the framing and conceptualising of the problem at hand also determines the strategies and interventions to solve the problem. In this case, the problem is represented as an individual lack of self esteem, stamina, personal clout, social capital, or personal drive and motivation. Conversely, this list of deficits may be viewed as symptoms of institutional difficulties or deficits, or of societal difficulties or deficits. This is an alternative representation of the problem, and it calls for alternative answers. One such example is depicted in the box below:

Collective Narrative Practice

Instead of isolating the few visibly vulnerable young people and meeting them with goal-oriented counseling methods, which apparently does not cause them to pursue their education, there are other options. Valgreen (2013) has further developed Collective Narrative Practice (Denborough, 2008) to adapt this approach for career guidance. Collective Narrative Practice has roots in narrative therapy (White & Epston, 1990), and is concerned with supporting people to discover or rediscover communities. The idea is to strengthen positive relationships between people. The starting point is an individual story that is shared with others in a group and from the individual stories to create a collective document. Subsequently the document can be shared with other similar groups, making it a collective process. The life stories thus attain significance for all of the participants regardless of the individual's degree of vulnerability. Such approaches could be developed to de-individualise guidance practices (Thomsen, 2009).

Conclusion

Increasingly, career guidance is an area of policy interest in most European countries. But guidance is seen as a lever for other policy areas. This is, for example, reflected in the aims and working methods of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN), i.e. EU's think tank on career guidance. Thus guidance policies are more preoccupied with other policy areas than guidance, but in which career guidance may have a role to play: employment, education, social inclusion, gender equality, rurality, and economic development, for example. The strong policy focus mirrors policies of seeing guidance as a societal steering instrument, and thus as an instrument of social control, where it should be an instrument for emancipation and empowerment. This is the flip side of current guidance policies.

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Establishing Croatia's lifelong career guidance service

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On July 1st 2013, Croatia became the 28th member state of the European Union. One requirement for Croatia's accession to the EU was the establishment of comprehensive life-long career guidance (LLCG) provision. In 2011, the Croatian Employment Service, the traditional provider of career guidance services to the unemployed, embarked on a programme to establish eight public facing pilot LLCG centres funded through EU transition funding. This article uses the results of an early evaluation of the new LLCG centres undertaken at the end of the pilot stage to explore the inter-relationship between this EU imperative and the policy and practice developments required to establish LLCG in a post-conflict and post-command economy emerging EU country.

Policy and socio-economic context

The European Commission has long reflected on the importance of career guidance, stating that guidance services have 'a key role to play in any advanced society, particularly ones undergoing rapid economic and social change' (Watts, 1993). The rationale for the provision of impartial careers information, advice and guidance (IAG) was asserted in a resolution passed by the EU Council of Ministers in 2004 that placed lifelong guidance clearly within the context of lifelong learning. The resolution emphasised that all European citizens should have access to high quality guidance at all stages of their lives:

> Guidance throughout life contributes to the achievement of the EU goals of economic development, labour market efficiency and occupational and geographical mobility by enhancing the efficiency of investment in education and vocational training, lifelong learning and human capital and workforce development.
>
> Council of the European Union (2004:2)

The European Life-long Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) was established in 2007 to assist EU countries to respond to these recommendations by developing co-operation on LLCG between member states. Recently the ELPGN has located LLCG within a number of pan-European economic and social issues including flexicurity, youth unemployment and the youth guarantee.

The concept of 'flexicurity' describes the flexibility required by employers to make changes to their workforce whilst recognising the need to maintain a level of security for employees who need to maintain their livelihood. Sultana (2012) notes that there is no 'one size fits all' solution in the way governments respond to provide economic security for their citizens. Responses will depend on a range of factors such as a country's specific history of industrial relations, the nature of its welfare state, the performance of its economy and its place in regional and international labour markets. Borbély-Pecze (2012) notes that LLCG can contribute as it acts as a bridge which balances the personal happiness of individuals with the economic and social needs of governments. The EU policy position is that whilst careers guidance will centre upon individual goals, it is also expected to contribute to public policy objectives: making education systems more efficient; contributing to the improved efficiency of the labour market; and helping to improve social equity.

Youth unemployment has become a global problem and can have long term negative effects on a person's life time prospects, earnings, health and social exclusion. At the time of writing, the economic recovery is in its early stages across the EU and it may not possible for states to increase the number of jobs for young people. However, improving the work-readiness of young people is a policy objective of many EU countries. This requires a new set of career management skills in a changing labour market. A growing policy issue therefore is how best to develop LLCG which embeds career management skills (Hughes & Borbély-Pezce, 2012).

In response to the crisis in youth unemployment and economic inactivity, EU political leaders have agreed a new political initiative, The Youth Guarantee (Borbély-Pecze & Hutchinson, 2013). Borbely-Pecze and Hutchinson argue that effective implementation of The Youth Guarantee can only be achieved by integrating the initiative into national programmes of life-long guidance. They argue that without integration, Youth Guarantee initiatives may simply result in temporary and short term activities which 'get young people off the streets'. Where Youth Guarantee initiatives are integrated they can become a 'springboard to a better future'. (Borbély-Pecze & Hutchinson, 2013: 18)

Policy lending and borrowing

The notion that policy initiatives travel both across national borders and between sectors is well researched. However Sultana (2009) notes that the success of policy lending and borrowing is a complex one and that there are a 'plethora of economic, ideological and cultural reasons why policies travel… and why sometimes they do not.' The development of Lifelong Career Guidance (LLCG) in Croatia is an interesting example which illustrates policy borrowing on two levels. In the first instance, Croatia is subject to the policy exerted by the EU through its EU membership requirements. The project to develop LLCG also provides an example of policy (and practice) borrowing on a smaller scale. The Croatian Employment Service (CES) was commissioned to implement a pilot of eight career centres using practitioners from other EU countries to develop and implement the provision. In adopting this approach, they can be deemed to have borrowed external policies and practices.

The pre-existing LLCG system in Croatia

Career guidance was established in Croatia as early as 1931 through the work of psychologist, Ramiro Bujas, and was delivered through CES. The service was delivered largely to unemployed or disabled Croatian citizens, although career counselling was offered as a universal service to a wider audience through four specific interventions; vocational information; vocational counselling; support to educational institutions through the provision of vocational information; and support to employers through a vacancy matching service. Whilst the CES was the largest and most significant provider of career support in Croatia, it was not the only provider. Other sources included learning providers and colleges, employers, private sector recruitment agencies, community and voluntary sector organisations and some public service organisations.

Borbély-Pecze (2012:10) argued that 'the public opinion of the CES and the county offices strongly links the service and the brand with unemployment registration and the unemployment benefit system'. Services were also being provided to school pupils to help with decisions concerning their future education, and particularly to pupils with disabilities. In reality few people outside the main target group of unemployed people or people with disabilities accessed career guidance services. During the pilot of the eight career centres referred to above, a number of explanations were suggested for this:

- Citizens were unused to taking responsibility for their careers and unwilling to make changes;
- Choice was constrained by a lack of opportunity. Guidance was therefore perceived as unnecessary;
- Citizens were unused to seeking help for career development issues.

The resources for career counselling were overstretched and largely office based. The established model of career guidance used a variety of approaches based on client need. An online information portal (Moj Izbor) provided a universal information service for all, irrelevant of age or stage of education, some clients received support through workshops whilst others (10% of unemployed people with disabilities and 5% of pupils with disabilities) received individual counselling to support them with career decision making. It was noticeable however that there was little connection at a policy level between employment services and other government departments, although on a practice level, partnerships between employment and education sector organisations as well as between some public and private providers did exist. Finally, no national structure or forum existed to draw career guidance managers and practitioners together to debate the development of policy or practice.

Although limited in its scope, the existence of a public career guidance sector, however configured, was a triumph for a country with a turbulent recent history which included financial austerity, conflict and the emergence from a command economy. Croatia demonstrated a commitment to deliver public career guidance services and had a strong platform on which to build.

Establishing the new Croatian LLCG

> LLCG Centres are central places for the expansion of professional career guidance services to the wider community and to a larger number of end users.
>
> Croatian Employment Services (2012:20)

The core for the new strategy for LLCG in Croatia is based on the idea that all citizens need to develop the skills and confidence to make the most of their life choices and opportunities and to follow the career path that is most appropriate for them. LLCG in Croatia therefore supports citizens to:

- Develop the skills to become effective career decision makers and managers;
- Have a clear understanding of the impact of career (i.e. education, training and employment) choices and to make well-informed and realistic career decisions;
- Be lifelong learners, motivated to pursue their professional development in order to achieve their potential;
- Have access to high quality careers education, labour market information and impartial career guidance;
- Develop information handling skills and be aware of career opportunities and
- Be able to use technology to assist their career decision-making, planning and management.

Developing the new approach to LLCG required many changes at policy and practice level. The first step in developing the new service was the development of a national strategy for LLCG (Croatian Employment Services 2012 n.p.). The new strategy reinforced the idea that successful LLCG reflected the policy priorities of a number of government ministries including improving the skills base of the country, promoting employment and improving social inclusion and social mobility. An essential element of the strategy was the recognition of fundamental principles of joint ownership, developing best practice and long term government commitment. The strategy was based on inputs from stakeholders with a range of public, private and third sector backgrounds drawn together to form the 'National Forum Working Group' later to become the National Forum for LLCG.

The strategy positions the service as a 'new' way of providing career guidance in Croatia. The service includes new publicly accessible centres for the delivery of LLCG (CISOKs) and the development of an IT based resource for gathering and disseminating management information, support materials and public facing information including LMI and vacancy information. Provision in the pilot centres is more client led, comprehensive, differentiated, targeted and localised. The LLCG service has a unique brand and is promoted as different from the traditional CES service. The model of delivery which has been adopted by CES is based on work by Professor J. Sampson (2008) and adapted for the Croatian context. The model offers

three levels of service delivery; self-help; brief assisted services and individual case managed services.

> The new differentiated service will allow us to meet the needs of the maximum number of clients. This ensures our resources are being used effectively. The new service will be based on the accurate assessment of needs of the service users. (Zećirević cited in Moore, 2013 n.p:18)

Reflection on the success of policy lending and borrowing in the implementation of Croatian LLCG

Policy borrowing at a national level

The development of LLCG is an EU imperative with finance made available for this through transition funding. Although at one level the EU can be seen as policy lending by determining the provision of LLCG amongst its member states, it is also using this imperative as an instrument to achieve its own wider policy goals. Whilst many would argue for the importance of LLCG in developing national aspiration and labour market efficiencies, it could be argued that there is a tension between the wider needs of the EU and the policy requirements of transitioning EU nations. These differences could be derived from variations in the specific cultural, political or economic contexts of individual nations which could be in conflict with wider EU requirements. The extent to which this EU policy directive will ultimately lead to the achievement of its goals is yet to be established. In the case of Croatia, transition funding has been used by the Croatian government to achieve a new focus on the delivery of LLCG building on an established foundation of vocational guidance.

The early evaluation of the new Croatian LLCG system (Moore, 2013) indicates that the government has established a long term vision and coherent strategy for career development and employability spanning a number of government departments, the public, private and voluntary sectors. This suggests that the Croatian Government and CES have enthusiastically embraced the role of 'policy borrower' at a national level.

New national marketing strategies are promoting strong messages about the benefits of engaging in career development for all Croatian citizens. This is encouraging aspiration amongst young people, resulting in a demand for education and jobs. However, unless there is a corresponding increase in opportunities, the intended improved efficiencies in the labour market are unlikely to result. This aim will only be realised if national approaches are established which engage employers and support entrepreneurship and business development across the country. Although the LLCG is tasked with supporting these important functions through its work with employers, the current lack of expertise and limited resources will need to be addressed if improved economic development is to be fully realised. CES is addressing this through the implementation of a further project in 2014 to introduce active labour market policies and practices.

As previously noted, ELGPN has established a number of policy and socio-economic drivers for LLCG. The following table describes the responses made by the new Croatian LLCG service in terms of each of these drivers in policy and practice terms.

The table below demonstrates that the Croatian LLCG service is responding to the ELGPN policy drivers in a number of ways. However it is early in the development of the new service and, at the point of evaluation, staff in the new centres had not had time to develop their practices fully and were seeking confirmation that their ideas for new approaches were acceptable. The evaluation of the CISOKs revealed that

> Staff have a great many ideas for activities and partnerships; however they are also seeking confirmation that their ideas are valid and appropriate. Moore (2013 n.p:24)

Further investigation might reveal that the new service has developed more sophisticated ways of responding to these policy drivers.

Table 1: The LLCG responses to ELGPN policy and socio-economic drivers

Policy and socio-economic driver	Response
Flexicurity	**Policy**
	• The inclusion of employer bodies and government ministries in the development of the new LLCG strategy. • The recognition in policy terms that a move from matching individuals to jobs to the development of employability was critical to national success. • The introduction of a 'needs based model for LLCG delivery' as opposed to the existing resource-based system.
	Practice
	• The positioning of LLCG shop front centres in easily accessible positions. • Flexible opening times to appeal to those otherwise active during normal shop opening times. • LLCG centres offer a one-stop-shop approach for all information and guidance services for education and employment • The provision of reliable and co-ordinated labour market information to enable Croatian citizens to make well informed career choices. • LLCG centres equipped with workshop areas and a menu of career development workshops including career management skills and employability. • The training of a new cohort of careers advisers in a range of techniques to engage and support life long career development. • Advisers perceived as more than users of LMI but rather as generators of LMI.
Youth unemployment	**Policy**
	• LLCG centres tasked with outreach activities to engage unemployed young people. • A new drive to target young people and their parents in career development activities and thinking through strong national marketing campaigns
	Practice
	• Some CISOKs have been positioned in areas frequented by youth such as adjacent to youth centres. • Centres designed to be modern and appealing to young people • Advisers tasked with facilitating links between schools and employers. • The provision of a local lead vacancy matching service
Youth guarantee	**Policy**
	• Partnership activity embedded in the national strategy as an underlying principle for success. • Local partnerships focusing on the career guidance and support needs of communities. • Targeting of disadvantaged groups • Differentiated model for the delivery of LLCG ensuring resources are used for those with most need.
	Practice
	• Formal agreements between LLCG centres and partners • A menu of workshops and group sessions aimed at supporting transition to work. • Emerging local plans to tackle socio-economic issues • Co-location of services

Policy borrowing at a local level

Policy borrowing at a local level can also bring tensions through the need to make changes to established processes which can have an impact on professional identities and practice. This has been the case in Croatia.

The national strategy for LLCG recognises a need to focus on employability and career development as a response to flexicurity. This requires a shift towards approaches which recognise individual life-course development and contextually influenced career decision making, and away from traditional matching processes. The new differentiated model of delivery has found resonance amongst the delivery staff. The evaluation of the new LLCG noted that

> All staff can describe this new model for the delivery and can articulate a rationale for this new approach. All staff have a commitment to engendering a cultural change amongst their clients which will empower and enable them to take control of their own career development requirements. Moore (2013 n.p:6)

Watts (1993) asserts that guidance services are important for individuals who are enabled by guidance processes to derive maximum benefit from the complex choices which face them. The existing CES service was delivered by skilled members of staff, however for the full impact of the new service to be achieved, a new vision for the professional identity of career counsellor needed to be realised. The new LLCG workforce was derived from established vocational guidance practitioners and newly recruited external staff from different vocational backgrounds. The vision for new careers practitioners was very different from the existing roles. The new roles

> were not for people who are very rigid. Not for those who expect to be given continual direction by the boss.
>
> (Zećirević cited in Moore, 2013 n.p:23)

The cross-country review of guidance (McCarthy, 2001) for the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) noted that training has a dominant effect in establishing a professional identity. Intensive training for the established psychologists was delivered by UK specialists. This provided insight into new theories and approaches and focused on client engagement and empowerment. As new staff were appointed they received mentoring support from the established, newly trained advisers to develop their own practice. Job descriptions were developed to support the new staff in their roles. The early evaluation noted the professional journeys of both established and new staff who were themselves finding new empowerment and engagement in their practice. Reflective practice has also been established as an integral and valued element of professional practice, and the evaluation noted the important role this played in developing and disseminating new approaches.

In addition to the training, the LLCG development processes have engaged staff in determining localised approaches to the delivery of services. The results of the early evaluation note that this has been an effective approach to engaging staff in the new service.

> The majority of staff have been involved in the business planning activities for their CISOKs. This process has been valued as one which respects experience and empowers CISOK staff. Staff have a real sense of ownership and commitment to the new service in part because of their own personal investment in planning the new service.
>
> (Moore, 2013 n.p:6)

One of the foundations of the new LLCG system in Croatia is that success requires local solutions. On a local level, the LLCG strategy draws together all providers of career guidance and support into local partnerships focussed around the new LLCG centres. The democratisation of career services established through the new strategy will enable local and national investment in previously unseen ways in education, training and jobs. Local partnerships, whilst still in their infancy, have delivered unexpected returns. In one area, the local government has formed a formal partnership agreement with the CISOK which reinforces the significance of the new LLCG in the achievement of local targets and promises resources and support to achieve mutual goals. In another area, a local school has provided additional equipment to the CISOK and has entered into conversations with staff on how to work more closely together to support the transitions

of vulnerable learners. In both instances, the LLCG has been described as a community asset and valued as an investment in the local area.

Finally, the development of the comprehensive online resource will have a number of benefits on a local level. The new system requires a higher level of engagement between CISOK career counsellors and local employers giving local staff more responsibility and focus in their outward facing activities. The provision of a locally managed online vacancy matching service will play dividends in easing the local labour market. The system will also provide an excellent source of monitoring data which will contribute to evidenced based local decisions surrounding the development of the new provision.

Conclusion

This paper set out to explore the inter-relationship between this EU imperative and the policy and practice developments required to establish LLCG in a transitioning EU country. The Croatian Government have seized the opportunity provided by EU transition funding to establish a radical new approach to LLCG as a means of achieving the wider policy goals of flexicurity, youth unemployment and The Youth Guarantee. As such the notion of policy lending can be seen to have been highly effective in driving forward policy and practice at a national level. Although it is still too early to comment on the impact of this initiative on Croatian citizens' career planning and development, the early evaluation of the LLCG service suggests that the de-centralisation and democratisation of career guidance in Croatia has had wider impacts on regional development by drawing stakeholders together to focus on the employment and career guidance needs in localities. The evaluation also suggests that professional practice is developing new and creative approaches. This would suggest that policy borrowing on a local practice level has had a positive impact on the delivery of LLCG. Future evaluations will be able to draw on a wide range of data including up to date management information and the reflections of a wide range of stakeholders and policy makers in order to reflect on the success of the new LLCG service and the extent to which policy borrowing has been helpful in achieving the wider national policy goals.

The LLCG initiative has been seen by many as a way of encouraging Croatian citizens to take responsibility for their own career development. Encouraging Croatian citizens to improve their aspirations and take responsibility for their career development and lifelong learning will advantage many elements of society, improving social mobility and social equity.

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'Girls into STEM and Komm mach MINT': English and German approaches to support girls' STEM career-related learning

Jo Hutchinson

European economies require STEM skilled people, yet compared with boys, girls demonstrate a tendency to reject some STEM study and STEM careers. This paper briefly reviews key factors that influence this phenomenon. It then introduces four examples of campaigns and initiatives that encourage girls to consider further participation in STEM in England and MINT in Germany as part of their career ambitions. Evidence of the impact of German initiatives is presented. It concludes that where there is a deliberate strategy linked with defined actions which tackle issues that are specific to girls, then gender imbalances can begin to change.

Introduction

Across Europe there are various degrees of skills needs and gaps in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM). The importance of STEM skills to developed economies is widely recognised because of their association with innovation and economic growth (UKCES, 2013). At the same time, there are gender imbalances across Europe observed in choice of study and occupation. Practice in Germany is interesting, as employers experience the same difficulties in recruiting the skills that they need as those reported elsewhere, but, with a contracting youth demographic, low levels of unemployment and high levels of employment, they are seeking more active ways to encourage females to consider MINT (Mathematik, Informatik, Naturwissenschaften und Technik). This paper is based on two sources of evidence. Firstly, a review of research reports and literature from England and Germany (in English) was undertaken to establish a baseline for comparative exploration. Secondly, interviews and discussions with managers of two nationally significant projects in Germany were undertaken as part of a case study visit hosted by Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences and the Competence Center Bielefeld.

STEM in European economies

A recent review of STEM skills in the European economy (EU Skills Panorama, 2012) concluded that the current supply is insufficient and, when combined with forecast growth in demand, such shortages present a potentially significant constraint on future economic growth in Europe. BusinessEurope (2011) report that this is due to the changing needs of commerce and industry, an ageing workforce, and a lack of in-migration of STEM skills to plug the gap. In England, the Roberts Review (2002) reported general needs across all science, engineering and technology areas. This has subsequently been refined and challenged with some analysis questioning whether there are any STEM shortages at graduate level (Smith, 2011); others point to an adequacy of STEM graduates but amongst people with inadequate employability skills (Mellors-Bourne, Connor & Jackson, 2011). Meanwhile, Mason (2012) has investigated the need for technician level skills in the STEM industries, concluding that industrial restructuring alongside the impact of education policies create a need for better ways to support young people to develop technician skills. A different perspective again is offered by analysis which focuses on the importance of geography and the magnet effect of London, meaning that businesses outside of the south east face greater

difficulty recruiting the skilled people they need (UKCES, 2013).

While the nature and extent of skills shortages are actively debated, there is a consistent message about the gendered pattern of participation. In England, for example, there are lower numbers of females than males studying all STEM subjects at A level (upper-secondary) except biology, and 85% of those studying engineering and technology degrees are male (WISE, 2012). The issue of gender segregation is also familiar in Germany. For example, 71% of girls who take apprenticeships choose those in only 20 out of 360 different types on offer. Furthermore they are in occupations where women already dominate the workforce. For example, 8% of female apprentices train to be managerial assistants, 7% sales clerks, 7% office administrators and 6% medical assistants (information provided by Girls' Day).

It follows that there are lower proportions of women working in STEM roles in industry (European Commission, 2012). For example, a report by VDI (2010) suggested that across Europe, one in every six engineers was female, but that the range extended from 30% of all engineers in Latvia and Bulgaria to 8.5% in England and 16% in Germany.

Girls therefore represent a significant untapped resource in the labour market, so addressing gender occupational segregation would be beneficial to industry. Indeed, according the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee (2014: paragraph 5), 'simply put, the UK economy needs more skilled scientists and engineers and this need will not be met unless greater efforts are made to recruit and retain women in STEM careers'. Furthermore, female participation in a broader range of STEM occupations and careers would open up opportunities in areas where pay and progression are better than in those occupations currently dominated by women. It should therefore enrich the working careers of some women.

Factors that deter girls from STEM

There are many reasons why girls reject STEM. These include the type of decision maker they are (Blenkinsop, McCrone, Wade & Morris, 2006), their family background and how this shapes the science capital that they use to shape their choices and behaviours (Archer, De Witt, Osborne, Dillon, Willis & Wong, 2010), and their general orientation towards STEM subject study (Motivaction and YoungWorks, 2010). In this paper, four further key factors are discussed that help explain relative lack of female participation in STEM. These are: lack of self-efficacy as a 'STEM' person; socialisation in a culture where femininity is antithetical to STEM careers; STEM curricula which use pedagogies that are better suited to male learners; and a lack of socially visible female scientists, engineers and mathematicians that limits girls' self-concept. Attempts to inform and motivate females about STEM need to recognise these issues if they are to be overcome.

Bandura's (1997: 37) concept of self-efficacy, 'a belief about what one can do under different sets of conditions with whatever skills one possesses' helps to explain why girls abandon STEM. If they believe that STEM skills will not be of use to them based on their knowledge of the study or employment conditions they see around them, then they will not invest in those skills. The mathematics results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) provides an example. PISA is a triennial international survey, undertaken by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) which aims to evaluate education systems worldwide by testing the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students. Analysis of the 2012 PISA survey shows that boys outperform girls in maths in 38 countries. This is particularly the case for the more difficult mathematics questions in the PISA survey which were answered correctly by 13% of boys and 10% of girls in the UK. However, this was not the case in other countries where girls outperformed the boys, so this is not a question of biological determinism. Borgonovi (2014) suggests that the gender difference in mathematics performance mirrors the gender difference in students' drive, motivation and self-belief between different countries and cultures. In other words, if girls think that they are unlikely to use STEM skills in their lives, they will not be motivated to study hard at it. Similarly, if they think that they are not good at a subject (even if in fact they are equally as good as the boys) they will be less inclined to pursue it (Morris, 2006).

The second and related reason why girls discount STEM is that, whilst they might like science they simply don't see themselves as a scientist (Archer et al, 2010). Young people understand only a very narrow range of STEM related jobs and those tend to be associated with culturally defined stereotypical images. The prevailing images of scientists for example are 'white men in lab coats' who have to be 'brainy' (Archer et al, 2010), whilst engineers are associated with men driving white vans ready to fix washing machines (Moore & Hooley, 2012). These associations encourage girls to think that STEM is not for them. This perception is then perpetuated by families and social groups that also share this view and who emphasise the important role of females in the home. Girls may then reject STEM because it is associated with a lifestyle that is incompatible with their future social roles within families and communities (Duru-Bellat, 1994).

Classroom experiences of learning STEM subjects are also related to girls' enjoyment of and desire to continue learning and applying those subjects. Institute of Physics (2006) research demonstrates that girls are more likely to engage with curricula that emphasise the social applications of science whereas boys are more comfortable with abstract theoretical learning. They conclude that girls' preference for more social relevance can be linked to the higher recruitment and retention of girls to physics courses which emphasise real-life applications. They also explored the impact of single sex schooling. All girls schools generate higher proportions of girls who study STEM at a higher level (Institute of Physics, 2013). The Institute of Physics explored whether this was due to social factors (as, in England, single sex education is associated with fee-paying schools or those with an intake selected on the basis of high academic achievement) or to tailoring the curriculum to girls' needs. They found that 'girl friendly' interventions had some positive impact but it was limited and short lived, whereas single-sex learning environments can help give girls confidence before they move into a mixed group environment.

A final aspect of girls' decision making is the lack of awareness of career roles that can and are being performed by women. Visioning a future self is a challenge but even more so if there are no templates on which to base one's vision. The SESTEM project (a European Leonardo funded project) concluded that 'the existence of socially visible, scientific women is a powerful factor, allowing girls to project themselves into a different future' (SESTEM, 2011: 30). The impact that exposure to people who are in work can have on career exploration motivation is increasingly seen as significant, with a correlation being made between the number of people in employment that young people meet and subsequent positive career outcomes (Mann, 2012). Consequently, if young women meet women in STEM employment this should enhance their overall career awareness, and may provide them with experiences that challenge their self-concept alongside their views of what is a realistic ambition.

The factors presented here are closely inter-related. For example, role models can change the prevailing view of what girls can do. Furthermore these factors may interact in a different way with the different subject areas within the STEM acronym. Finally, there is as yet only limited empirical evaluation evidence of the impact of such interventions on young women's choices (Tripney, Newman, Bangpan, Niza, Mackintosh & Sinclair, 2010). Nevertheless, if career support interventions aim to provide impartial career learning opportunities to challenge stereotypes and raise aspirations, then they need to have regard to these types of issue.

Career interventions in England and Germany

There are a plethora of initiatives that seek to promote STEM subjects to pupils either to engage interest in STEM subjects among greater numbers of young people so that they continue to study them for longer, or to raise their awareness of the wide range of career opportunities that STEM study can lead to. A study of science education across Europe found that all countries have their own range of actions designed to enhance engagement in science, and some have national strategies in place with associated infrastructures. But they found that 'very few partnerships seem to focus their attention on raising girls' interest in science' and that 'only some countries provide specific initiatives which seek to encourage more girls to choose scientific careers' (Eurydice, 2011: 57).

In England for example, there are literally hundreds of opportunities that schools can engage with to support their pupils' STEM learning. These are compiled in the STEM Directories which are supported by the Department for Education and are searchable by several factors. However, while many seek to ensure that there is equality of access, only four of them are exclusively for girls.

There are examples of career programmes in England that have been designed in such a way that they are providing girls and young women with positive career-related learning experiences. The WISE campaign in England celebrates thirty years in 2014 and has been working with businesses, schools, young people and their parents to offer a range of activities such as a blog of inspiring women, a workshop and other learning materials which can be taken into schools and colleges, and discovery workshops for girls, parents and teachers. WISE is an independent community interest company whose aim is to increase the gender balance in the UK's STEM workforce from 13% female employees to 30% by 2020 (WISE, 2012: 3).

In addition to campaigns and resources, there have been programmes specifically aimed at exposing young people to STEM careers to achieve equality and diversity ambitions. One example is the London Engineering Project which managed a programme of activity across south and east London which attracted deep engagement from five large engineering employers. It ran a range of activities including STEM ambassador programmes, residentials, e-mentoring, support for school science and STEM clubs, and a range of taster days offered by a higher education institution. One core element was to develop training approaches to help colleagues working on the project to understand the issues around gender and cultural awareness. The evaluation concluded that this approach provided an invaluable way to help people build confidence to tackle issues around gender and challenging stereotypes as well as improving the promotion of engineering positively to young people (Harrison, 2009). The evaluation reported positively on the use of role models whose impact was deepened when mentor and mentee were actively engaged in a practical activity such as a STEM day or a design and build competition.

A second example is RAF WISE (Collins, 2013), which is a week-long work experience offered by the Royal Air Force. This provides young women with a residential experience which includes a programme of activities that engage them in science learning leading to a CREST Award[1]. It also provides opportunities to work with female mentors and encourages familiarisation with a STEM workplace. An evaluation of the first three years concluded that it has provided participants with employability skills and achievements that can be used to support their transition to further learning, and also that 'the messages that have been taken back into schools and the local community have been positive' (Collins, 2013: 45).

The English approach to challenging stereotypes and promoting equality of opportunity in STEM careers relies on the integration of this agenda within other actions. This is informed at a national level by organisations such as WISE and other national networks but at present, there is no single government funded organisation. The mainstreaming approach to embed gender issues within enhancement and engagement activities that occur in science and other STEM subjects can work well. According to the London Engineering Project, this can be a very effective and sustainable strategy. Similarly there are few projects or initiatives which are specifically targeted at females such as RAF-WISE but again this provides an example of an approach which brings benefits to both employer and the female participants.

Germany provides a contrasting example. It too has its share of initiatives but it also has national and regional infrastructures which provide a framework for their MINT engagement activities. It is worth highlighting the context in which young people are supported to make career choices in Germany as it contrasts with the current provision in England (Watts, 2013). Firstly, the dual system of academic and vocational education is very stable and well known – this is not to say that educational structures and qualifications are inert – but the overall architecture has changed little over decades. This contrasts with decades of

1 The British Science Association run a series of awards at bronze, silver and gold levels which recognise achievement in a scientific investigation. They are nationally recognised awards that can be used to provide evidence of achievement as part of a personal statement or curriculum vitae.

routine reformation of the English system which has seen changes to organisational infrastructure, funding routes, qualifications and teacher training across all aspects of education and training. Secondly, the career service in Germany is professionalised, well resourced, all-age and universally accessible, so most young people will have had contact with the service run by the Federal Employment Agency (Jenschke, Schober & Frübing, 2011). Finally, schools incorporate Arbeitslehre (learning about work) into the curriculum – either as a subject in its own right or integrated into other curriculum subjects. Together this means that all young people have had the opportunity to learn about core concepts associated with career whilst at school, including aspects of equal opportunities (Ihsen, Schneider, Wallhoff & Blume, 2011; Blättel-Mink, 2009). Consequently, enhancement activities can be more focused on specific elements of the labour market or transition process.

Go MINT – the National Pact for Women in MINT Careers[2], was developed to change the image of MINT professions in society. It is a network of more than 179 partners from politics, business, science and the media, including nine 'Länder' companies such as Siemens and Daimler and big research institutions including the Helmholtz Association. Go MINT is part of the federal government's qualification initiative and was launched in 2008 at the instigation of the Federal Ministry for Education and Research, with the aim of increasing young women's interest in scientific and technical degree courses and attracting female university graduates to careers in business and science. Within Go MINT the Federal Ministry of Education initiated a number of projects which may change in focus each year. These include:

- MINTalente – a network of female role models for girls
- echnik braucht Vielfalt (Technology Needs Diversity) – a project focusing on young female in-migrants
- CyberMentor: CyberMINT Communities – an e-mentoring and social media network
- Mädchen-Technik-Talente-Foren (Girls' technology talents forums) - with a focus on optical sciences.

All partners of Go MINT are providing numerous good practice projects. The Go MINT national agency undertakes internal evaluation of key aspects of their work and the management team therefore are able to state that key elements of successful activities are: practical career decision-making support, the contact with role models at an early stage, and the affirmation of one's own technical competences and interests. Together, the partners are committed to promoting and optimizing successful initiatives and activities, as well as developing new ideas and integrating them into existing structures. The Pact is always open for new partners and input.

The importance of 'MINT für mädchen' to Germany is demonstrated by federal support of the network that enjoys high level of employer engagement. In turn, Go MINT strengthens the public awareness of the issue. The information portal (www.komm-mach-mint.de) provides an overview of nationwide activities, including a national project map with information on more than 1,000 projects and provides a platform to share single actions and lessons learnt which would otherwise be dispersed across a local or regional level.

All of the initiatives together are gradually delivering change. In 2012 one in four female first year students opted for a scientific or technical degree course. A look at the absolute numbers of MINT-female first year students shows an above-average increase: in 2012 there were 67% more first year students in Engineering Sciences than in 2008 (from 21,400 to 35,700) and 52% more first year students in Natural Sciences and Mathematics than in 2008 (from 38,200 to 58,100).

An evaluation of Go-MINT has been undertaken by its core team (Haaf, 2013). Results from their research have summarised some of its key impacts, including that in total it has engaged 436,000 females since it started, and that 69% of Go-MINT participants chose a career in STEM. Perhaps just as significantly, 82% of Pact members have increased their activity in this area since signing the memorandum. The real strength of this approach is that it is employer driven and links key employers with learning providers and policy makers. This gives it authenticity, sustainability and credibility

2 Further information can be found at: http://www.komm-mach-mint.de/

with girls and with their parents and other employers.

A second example of an initiative designed to encourage further female participation in MINT by challenging their self-concept and providing positive role models is Girls' Day[3]. On one day every year business, research centres and other institutions put on simultaneous open day events for girls, mainly aged 13 – 15 years. Girls apply for places at companies directly through the scheme either independently or with the support of their school. In 2013, Girls' Day was held on 24th April and involved 108,000 girls and 9,200 events across Germany. Over 1 million girls have been involved since the initiative started 10 years ago. A wide range of partners are involved in organising these events, including employers, trade unions and trade associations as well as schools. It enjoys good media profile, assisted by the involvement of Angela Merkel, herself a physics graduate. Girls' Day has three core principles. Firstly, to be a single-sex event giving girls the chance to explore new professional territories without feeling like they are competing with boys and secondly, to provide hands on experience and gain self-efficacy by practical job-related activities. The third principle is for girls to meet role models. Each year a standardised evaluation tool is used to assess impact on girls, on companies and on schools. Findings are positive. For example, 36% of girls say that they can see themselves working in that type of organisation, and over 60% of the participating organisations use young female workers or students to mentor the visiting girls. Furthermore, the proportion of schools that focus career lessons to include gender-specific career orientation has doubled since 2004 (Girls' Day, 2013). For the past three years, there have also been Boys' Days to introduce boys to occupations such health and social care.

There are many projects in Germany which have the specific aim of focussing on girls. Other smaller examples include one run by Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences' Niedersachsen Technikum programme[4]. This places young women for six months in a technical company, with one day a week in the university where they can build friendships and share experiences. This occurs after Secondary Level 2 at the age of 18 or 19. Their expenses are covered by the company (about 350 Euro per month). Participants complete a project which is useful to the company and in doing so they gain confidence in their ability, a network of peers, and familiarity with the university and courses they could progress to. For the young women this provides a low-risk way to start technical studies without making a long-term commitment to an apprenticeship or university course. In 2013, 100 young women used this opportunity for a six month technical course. Of these, 92 opted for further MINT-related vocational courses afterwards.

Conclusions

The shortage of STEM skills is experienced across Europe as is the imbalance between the proportions of males and females studying STEM subjects and working in STEM jobs. There are factors that are specific to young women that conspire to push them away from STEM. Career interventions can play a part in helping to address those factors but there are social, cultural and pedagogical factors that need attention by other partners.

The examples covered in this paper have shown how partnership initiatives can begin to change girls' self-efficacy by demonstrating, in safe and structured environments, that they can do things they might have thought were beyond them, such as computer programming or completing a CREST Award. Moreover, the experience also teaches girls that these skills are and will be relevant to their future lives. The examples have shown the importance of role models and mentors in challenging girls' assumptions about what 'people like me' can do either through participation in work taster events such as Girls' Day or work placements such as RAF-WISE. These indicate how it is possible to change girls' world views through exposure to different people and places.

The projects also demonstrate either through participation in gender equality training (as in the London Engineering Project) or through awareness raising (by the Go-MINT pact) that teaching approaches and workforce development practices can be changed to make the learning and working

3 Further information can be found at http://www.girls-day.de/

4 Further information can be found at https://www.uni-osnabrueck.de/studieninteressierte/gaststudium/niedersachsen_technikum.html

experience better for girls and more productive for organisations. While the culturally embedded and socially acceptable norms that influence girls' choices underpinning STEM are profound, there is evidence emerging from the German experience that change can be effected. This will be important for careers practitioners and their strategic partners in England and elsewhere to both monitor and emulate.

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Acknowledgements

The author is grateful for the support of Christina Haaf/Go MINT and Lore Funk/Girls' Day, for their reviews of German practice and for Dawn Foreman's proofing and writing support. This investigation is based on a case study exchange which was incidental to, but part of, a wider study funded by the Gatsby Charitable Foundation.

'The whole world is my home': An investigation into how a globalised lifestyle, international capital and an international schooling experience influence the identities and aspirations of young people

Jonathan Young

This article discusses the findings of a study involving the aspirations of students in an international school in Belgium. Aspirations are framed and formed via the interaction and interrelationship of self and social context. The originality of this work is in its emphasis on students' own perceptions of the influences on their aspirations, within a new geographical arena and the social sub-culture of a fluid, semi-transient international group. The findings will add to our understandings of international schooling and might usefully inform pedagogical practices and programmes of professional development for staff in order to better serve students.

Introduction

Aspiration has been described as the various desires and ambitions held by young people about their futures (Kintrea, St. Clair and Houston 2011: 12) and from the resources available in four domains: place, school, family and individual. Aspirations are multidimensional in nature; from careers to education to financial, familial and social. Aspirations can also be perceived as an emotional state to be affected; aspiring to become something, aspiration as an emotional disposition, an emotional state that can be affected and an emotional state that affects other emotions (Brown 2011: 9). Aspirations shift from fantasies in early childhood to tentative explorations of personal interests, abilities and values in adolescence (McDevitt, Hess, Leesatayakun, Sheehan and Kaufield 2013: 532).

Education has long been considered as playing a part in the construction or formation of self and identity (Seery 2010: 63). International schools celebrate the number of nationalities represented in their student body and teaching staff but an examination of the discourse surrounding international school students suggests a primitive portrayal of identity (Pearce 2013: 78). International schools are growing in number and attracting greater interest from researchers (Hayden 2011: 214). This project offers a novel approach to examining the identities of young people attending an international school through their own personal lens.

The context for the study is a fee paying international school in Belgium, where, at the time of writing, there are approximately 800 students enrolled and over 50 nationalities represented. International schools are in many respects a well-kept secret, with many completely unaware of their existence (Hayden and Thompson 2013: 3). Suffice to say that since no international body has the authority to adjudicate on whether or not a school may describe itself as an international school, the 'international school' label has to be interpreted cautiously (Hayden and Thompson 2013: 4). In this connection Bunnell (2006: 156) argues that international schools may not share an underlying educational philosophy. MacKenzie (2009: 330) explains that international schools are hard to define but have common characteristics such as; they are mostly established to meet the needs of expatriate

communities, they have volunteers on their boards, and the language of instruction is predominantly English. This resonates with Jones (2011: 312) description of international schools as catering to elite professional families who have high aspirations for their children and Hayden's (2011: 211) observation that aspiring middle class parents seek a competitive edge for their children in a globalized market.

Questions

The study aimed to answer the following question:

How do a globalised lifestyle, international capital and an international schooling experience shape the identities and aspirations of young people?

The researcher also wished to explore the relationships between first world citizenship privilege, parents, international schooling and globally nomadic experiences and the nature of young people's aspirations.

A review of the literature on young people's identity and aspirations

Identity formation and agency

Power dimensions within adult-child relationships are heightened in schools where adults involved hold posts of responsibility and authority in relation to students (Robinson and Taylor 2013: 33). Within this adult dominated power structure of the school it has been argued that students exercise agency in their interpersonal relationships (Larkin 2013: 3). The individual agent is powerful, able to take action and to change social structures (Giddens 1984: 15). Agency has a role to play between external forces and internal motivations and people in positions of influence can affect agency.

A major task of adolescence and emerging adulthood is to forge an identity that consolidates one's beliefs, values, and goals into a coherent story that can be used as a basis for making life decisions and the transition to adulthood (Yeager and Bundick 2009: 424; Malanchuk, Messersmith and Eccles 2010: 97). The relationship between global mobility and identity is also important here as it could involve a loss of attachment, isolation, anger, and acceptance issues (Grimshaw and Sears 2008: 259).

The shaping of aspirations

For the purposes of this study, the researcher draws upon the already large amount of work done on aspirations and young people.

Aspirations evolve over time as social and personal circumstances change and will shift considerably throughout an individual's life (Hart 2012: 35; Kintrea et al 2011: 13). At ages 9-13 young people begin to evaluate what is desirable, and realistic, for people like them, and start to think about the effort required for and likelihood of achieving desired outcomes (Rose and Baird 2013: 160). Atherton, Cymbir, Roberts, Page and Remedios (2009: 59) state that educational aspirations remain high as young people become more aware of their capabilities. This is supported by Gutman and Akerman (2008: iii) who claim that in general, children's aspirations decline as they mature and their understanding of the world increases and Ferrante (2009: 559) who recognizes that individuals learn from experience and revise their aspirations.

Parents are seen as the most important others in shaping aspirations as they provide the opportunities and support for their children and are a constant influence on them (Strand and Winston 2008: 250). The impact of parenting style, involvement and goals upon children's educational and career choices is strong and familial participation is needed to achieve a positive educational atmosphere (Garg, Kauppi, Lewko and Urajnik 2002: 88).

The importance of relationships formed in international schools

Personal relationships have been singled out in classical social theory as fundamental to a secure sense of an agentic self, of a place in the social world, and of basic trust in others (Jamieson and Milne 2012: 268). Every

teacher needs to forge positive relationships with students as teaching is one of the foremost of personal relations (Marsh 2012:161; Busher 2012: 114; Noddings 2012: 771). Qualities such as care, trust, respect and concern for young people are seen by students as key to helping them learn, take risks and persevere (Busher 2012: 114; Aldridge and Ala'l 2013: 49; Lampert 2012: 364). In facilitating these relationships and positive interactions, schools have an opportunity to create what Cook-Sather (2009: 180) calls a "listening culture"; listening and responding to students in an atmosphere of mutual trust.

As previous research suggests, during early adolescence, young people exhibit increased psychological investment in peers groups and dependence on friends for support (Wentzel, Barry and Caldwell 2004: 196). The unique situation of globally nomadic students means that they share a commonality with others of similar experience and as Pearce (2011:170) explains, develop skills in repeated loss and reconstruction of friendships. Some of these young people struggle with unresolved grief, feelings of isolation and rootlessness due to their transient lifestyles and have ambivalent feelings regarding home and roots (Bates 2013: 88; Fail, Thompson and Walker 2004: 322). This potentially negative impact of mobility was explored by South and Haynie (2004: 316) who linked the character of friendship networks with highly-mobile students. Transient young people's sense of belonging is stronger to relationships than to a particular country (Fail et al 2004: 321).

International capital and international schooling

Young people's familial circumstances, mobility, exposure to different cultures and socio-economic background allow them to enter what Bates (2012:263) would call a 'first world citizenship'. This citizenship gives these young people a unique set of competencies, skills and capitals, termed 'international capital' which allows them to thrive in a global environment (Yemini 2012: 162; Bates 2012: 263). This cosmopolitan capital is accumulated while living abroad, visiting and hosting friends of different nationalities, maintaining a globally dispersed circle of friends and relatives and possessing mastery of at least one other language (Weenink 2008: 1092).

These young people are attending international schools due to their parents' globally mobile lifestyles which take them through a sequence of locations and cultural situations. These children have limited opportunity to choose the type of education they can pursue or the form or location in which it takes place (Hart 2012: 279). Whilst relative affluence gives opportunities for travel, first-hand experience of new locations and people, and relationships with people from a range of different cultural backgrounds, the longer term impact can be more profound on these young people (Nette and Hayden 2007: 435; Grimshaw and Sears 2008: 259).

Data collection and analysis

The study involved interviewing 10 girls and 10 boys (all aged 13-14) individually, on two occasions. Participants for this study came from the students whom the researcher teaches and were from 16 countries. Taking participants from your own student body is an example of what Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2010: 170) define as 'convenience sampling'.

The participants were instructed to choose images of people, places or situations which they felt affected their identity. The aim was to reveal aspects of the life history of the participants using photo-elicitation. The participants were encouraged to describe the images in their own words, to identify the image and to express the emotional meaning of the image for them (University of Leicester 2012: 68). The researcher used one question to begin the interview: 'Tell me about these photos and why you chose them?' During the second round of interviews, a mix of individualised questions to each participant and a set of semi-structured questions for all of the participants were posed. The following are the questions common to all of the participants in the second interview:

1. Tell me about the people in your life who influence you.
2. What do you think an international school gives you?
3. What do you hope to do after you have left school?
4. Tell me a bit about your life outside school.

5. What does it mean to be successful to you?
6. Is there anywhere you feel you belong?
7. Do you have anything else you want to share or to add?

Data analysis

1. The researcher recorded and listened to the interviews then manually transcribed the data, word for word. Participants were then permitted to read the transcribed interviews.
2. The transcriptions were read by the researcher a number of times and key words and phrases highlighted for coding.
3. Themes were drawn from the interview data based on frequency of occurrence of the coded issues.
4. Theory was generated from what was grounded in the data.

Findings

A rich and large range of testimony emerged in this study. Some findings are listed below with direct quotations from the transcripts added. All of the names mentioned are pseudonyms.

Theme 1: Global citizenry and privilege

The participants in this study all travel, some extensively. This cosmopolitan capital is accumulated while living abroad, visiting and hosting friends of different nationalities, maintaining a globally dispersed circle of friends and relatives and possessing mastery of at least one other language (Weenink 2008: 1092).

> Anya: …we travel to a bunch of different places…so the car is kinda like my mobile home …I feel like the whole world is my home…

> Gabby: …my favourite thing is probably the travel…like if I hadn't moved to Belgium I wouldn't have met these people and like there's no way I would have been skiing on my 13th birthday in Italy…

Theme 2: The influence of family

Advice from adults is especially important for younger students and parents loom large in their lives as guardians of their children's learning (McDevitt et al 2013: 544; Wainwright and Marandet 2011: 97). The participants in this study perceive that parents and family have a significant impact on them. This supports the work of Kintrea et al (2011), Strand and Winston (2008), Garg et al (2002) and Cuiting and Kerpelman (2007).

> Anya: …I have a really big bond with my parents cos I know that I can always trust them and tell them about like mostly everything…

> Allie: …still sometimes it's good because on my mum's side…I don't keep secrets from her and yeah, so my mum's like, she's like the best mum ever. She means so much to me.

Theme 3: Relationships

All teenagers worry, and the thing that worries them most is their relationship with other people (Bainbridge 2009: 216). Relationships with friends, both past and present were important to the participants in this study.

> Allie: …they (friends) mean a lot to me because we shared a lot of things together and I mean nine years is really long…when I came to St. John's it was really hard to separate myself from them…

> Osawa: …then in 2005 we moved to Belgium and it was very sad because I had to separate with my best friends…

Theme 4: Appreciation

These global nomads have spent time in a variety of locations, changing home and friendships, sometimes regularly and having little geographical notion of 'home' (Hayden 2011: 220). Despite having to leave friends and family behind, participants viewed their nomadic but privileged circumstances with optimism; seeing the opportunities this global lifestyle affords them.

> Gabby: …mostly excited about the language, the aspects of travel and the culture so there are a lot of really great new experiences here…
>
> Minty: …being an international person I feel like I need a home of the whole world and not have one country and support one football team, I just decided I am for everybody…

Theme 5: Country of origin

The participants shared their feelings of pride and identification with their birth countries and the traditions each respective country enjoys.

> Doreen: I really love Norway because so I chose some pictures from the national day, which is the 17th of May and we did that every year and have so many memories with our family and friends…
>
> Jaap: …this is a picture of my grandma reading a story to us (new) because we have to keep up our Dutch language so she is reading a book in Dutch…

Theme 6: High hopes

The participants hold high educational and career aspirations. In response to the interview question 'What do you hope to do after you have left school?', they responded with the following:

> Minty: when I was small I wanted to be a farmer and then I wanted to be an astronaut, like all the dreams, but now I really want to do global warming because it is a problem that is happening
>
> Karl: I would like to be a pilot…
>
> Gabby: …after I have left school I think I would like to go into politics…I think that's something that coming from an international school could help me with…

Theme 7: Other belongings

Teenagers have to develop an ability to deal with themselves, their world and other people (Bainbridge 2009: 185). Some participants defined where they belonged as wherever their family or friends are present. This is in keeping with Probyn's idea that belonging captures the desire for some sort of attachment, be it to other people, places or modes of being; a sense of connection (Probyn 1996: 19). In response to the interview question 'Is there anywhere you feel you belong?', two participants offered the following responses:

> Jaap: …where people care about you, about me, and who enjoy me for who I am.
>
> Osawa: …pretty much where there is friends, anywhere there is friends.

Conclusions

The young people in this study are quite aware of the world around them, have a broad world view and see the benefits a global lifestyle can offer them. Their experience of living in a world of privilege does not limit their ability to see themselves as 'Other'. The participants are aware of their position in society and appreciate their unique circumstances.

They show attachment and appreciation of their countries of birth and friends still living there, as exhibited in the photo-elicitation interviews. The participants see their country of birth as something important to them and part of their identity. They also have what Bates (2012: 263) would call 'multiple citizenships', which are the result of their parents' high level qualifications, giving them access to privileged 'first world citizenship'.

It has been argued that education must raise the quality of a person's life and essential to this are the basic moral feelings of love, trust and thankfulness (Wilkinson and Wilkinson 2013: 108). Although they experience frequent loss of close friends, these young people look forward to meeting new friends and develop strong skills of adaptability and acceptance and being comfortable in many different situations as a result. This resonates with the work of MacMurray (2012) and Pearce (2011) and their work on human relationships and friendships. This recognition that trusting relationships in schools are beneficial means that a caring and supportive school atmosphere can help students who experience these transient lifestyles.

The participants in this study are the children of the resourceful and well-resourced (Ball 2013: 112) and speak in an agentic way about their futures. They appear to be confident, optimistic and positive as they express a significant gratitude to their families for affording them the international capital they possess. Their future self-perception is one of expected fulfilment of their goals.

Accepting that the young person's own perception is the young person's reality enforces acceptance and respect for the young person. The participants expressed appreciation over being given the opportunity to talk about their lives in this study. Children in international schools have not been given a voice in a project such as this, which attends to their feelings and insights into the factors that influence their aspirations. This material will not only help these students reflect upon their current and future selves, but will also help those in international schools better understand and serve their students. Furthermore, where international displacements put young people in social environments for which their upbringing did not prepare them, or where they feel a unique pressure to fit in, those who work closely with them can help those young people adjust and cope (Lee and Kramer 2013: 19).

Today's international school students may become the diplomats of tomorrow brokering peace through their ability to empathise and interact with those of different cultural backgrounds (Hayden 2011: 221). This study allowed for young people to relate and share their life histories, and if more of this was encouraged in international schools, a more accepting atmosphere and thereby a more peaceful world, could be created. International schools have a social and educational responsibility to do so. In addition, so much learning for these young people takes place outside the classroom and is not recognised (MacDonald 2013: 52). If we take students' life experiences into account, and well as their global competencies, we can then find new ways of helping them to be part of the solutions to the world's problems.

In order to better serve and empower their students, international school staff have an opportunity to improve upon the practice of listening to and working with this unique group of first world citizens. Research in this area can also provide an opportunity for current international school students to examine their own lives and aid educators in the development of more effective ways of understanding the lives of young people.

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Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank his doctoral tutors, Dr. Joan Smith and Dr. Hugh Busher of The University of Leicester for their constant guidance and support. The author would also like to thank The European Council of International Schools for receipt of The ECIS Fellowship Grant Award for the Advancement of International Education for 2012-13.

Supporting international students with careers provision: A review of UK higher education careers service provision and a case study based on the University of Exeter

Rachel Coombes

As part of my role as a Careers Consultant at the University of Exeter I decided to undertake some research in to the careers provision offered to international students. I wanted to review provision across the UK higher education sector and then focus on the University of Exeter, my employer, which has a growing international student body of over 4000 students and ambitious growth plans. With growing numbers of international students, from a variety of different countries, come different needs and expectations along with increasing pressure on University support services as a whole. Through surveying a number of universities, this report explores how UK universities have been dealing with this challenge and looks at the expectations international students have of careers services. It became clear that this was a topic high on the agenda of a number of institutions, and whilst this report focuses in detail on Exeter, the information obtained and recommendations made may provide useful insights for other universities.

Introduction

The UK has for a long time been amongst the most popular destinations for international students; however as other countries are starting to loosen their border restrictions, we are tightening ours. Finding work in the UK following graduation therefore is becoming increasingly harder for international students, making it all the more important for higher education careers services to understand how best to support these students in a changing market place. Careers provision to date has mainly been focused on helping international students understand the UK job market. Increasingly now there appears to be a shift towards supporting students in finding work either back in their home country or elsewhere overseas. The Prime Minister's Initiative went some way towards supporting careers services by funding missions to China and India to help improve understanding of these markets, along with developing relationships with employers and resources to support UK careers services (AGCAS and NASES: 2011). Obtaining such detailed information however is resource and funding intensive and something most UK careers services are unlikely to be able to provide on an individual basis.

The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) has published guidance to assist UK higher education providers in managing international students' experiences (2013). The report acknowledged that whilst surveys of international students have been on the whole positive there were areas that had lower levels of satisfaction; in particular, work opportunities and career advice. This is reiterated in work undertaken by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) which also found that of those students surveyed who stated dissatisfaction with the careers service, 58% were international students. It suggested that 'Careers staff believed this was often due to international students' employment expectations which could be challenging to meet' (ECU: 2012, p19). From the student perspective 'there was a view that the careers service is not sufficiently internationally focused, or only relevant for EU students' (ECU: 2012, p19).

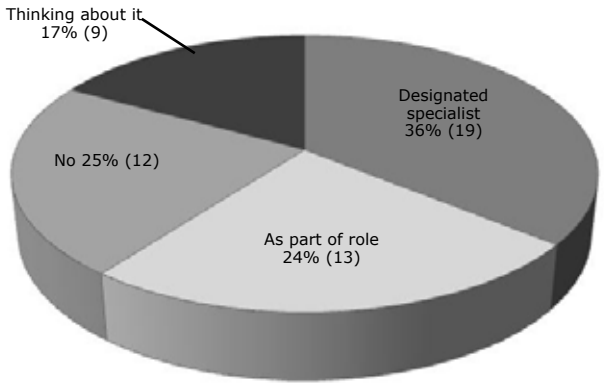
UK careers services

I carried out semi-structured interviews with relevant staff at 4 UK higher education institutions from April to May 2013. Institutions were sampled for their position in the market place, ease of access, availability of information or due to contacts I already had in place. I also conducted a secondary analysis of a relevant, informal survey of 53 UK institutions (Hillary, 2013), conducted my own informal survey[1] and attended a careers and international student advisors workshop[2]. The findings from these are detailed as follows.

Staffing in the careers service

My analysis of Hillary's survey of UK Universities suggests that staffing the careers service to support international students varies a great deal across institutions. Of the 53 institutions who responded to the survey, 60% (32 institutions) had either a designated specialist or someone with international careers support as part of their role.

Figure 1: UK Institutions and International Careers Specialists



From Figure 1 (whole numbers of respondents are shown in brackets) it is apparent that most responding universities see the need to incorporate an International Careers Specialist or are thinking about doing so. Where reasons were given for those who said 'No' often it was due to funding constraints or the size of the service. In most cases, there appeared to be around 1-2 members of staff involved in international career support delivery or often it would be split across the whole team. Job roles and responsibilities also varied. Typical activities included being leads for certain countries, International Opportunity Managers, International Careers Consultants, International Information Officers, Global Labour Market roles.

Responsibilities of international careers specialists

My reading of Hillary's survey suggests that there were a number of similar responsibilities in the roles of international careers specialists across various institutions; along with a number of activities common to most of these specialist staff:

- Running international student specific careers workshops
- Dissemination of information to other careers staff
- Liaison with international student support services
- Developing web resources
- Linking with employers

In both Hillary's survey and my interviews it was consistently reported that there are many other innovative approaches being undertaken, such as networking events overseas, buddy schemes and blogs. Some are easier to implement than others and can be very institution or resource dependent. It was consistently reported that international careers specialists do not usually offer 1-1 guidance advice solely for international students. It was argued that this was something all careers staff should have knowledge of. The importance of having someone to act as a lead in the area to help disseminate the information to all staff to ensure international students needs are catered for was stressed. Immigration information is also not usually a part of the role however UKBA registered staff in International Student Support roles were often brought in to deliver it.

Overseas Labour Market Information (LMI)

With a growing global market place it is not just international students who are requesting this

1 Survey carried out using AGCAS Link which is an email enquiry system used by higher education careers professionals. The survey focused on the provision of overseas labour market information. 19 institutions responded to this survey.

2 Workshop held by AGCAS and the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) in April 2013.

information but home students looking to work abroad too. Given the increase in demand for this type of information and the number of different countries students may be interested in, it can be difficult to judge how best to provide this information. Again, institutions were approaching this in varying ways, which I have classified into six forms of support:

Non-institution specific websites

Through the responses to the survey I undertook it is apparent that there are many useful websites that institutions are using to support their students. These websites collate detailed resources around specific countries and assemble information that would be highly resource intensive for institutions to do on their own. The main websites reported were:

- Going Global - www.goinglobal.com/
- AGCAS Country Profiles - www.agcas.org.uk/agcas_resources/456-Country-Profiles
- Prospects Country Profiles - www.prospects.ac.uk/country_profiles.htm
- Gradlink - www.gradlinkuk.com/
- I-Graduate - www.i-graduate.org/

Institution specific websites for overseas LMI

One institution reported in my survey that developing their own country specific LMI was not something they had time and capacity for. They had developed these in the past but due to the time involved in trying to research them and keep them up to date they had decided to instead provide links to other sources of information. Several universities mentioned that they felt they should be doing more as they felt they did not have the best resources in place to help support students with overseas LMI.

One respondent I interviewed, however, seemed to have developed a very interesting approach. Their service did not provide detailed overseas LMI, thereby duplicating what may already be on other websites, rather they had created country profiles which detailed the institution's student destination information for that country along with alumni profiles, links to further information and jobs advertised by the University for that country. In this way the information was very specific to the institution and could be easily updated.

Workshops

Two respondents to my survey mentioned providing specific workshops for certain countries. These workshops often focused on the countries where the majority of international students came from such as China, India and Nigeria. The workshops provided information on job hunting overseas and the local LMI for that region. Six institutions also made reference to running more general sessions on working overseas, rather than focusing on a specific country. In this way, they are looking to help students understand some of the differences involved in applying for jobs abroad.

Events

One respondent to my survey reported specific events it was running related to overseas LMI. These were called Global Job Search events and targeted at international students. The aim was to provide students with information on international graduate schemes and also help them understand the differences between different countries recruitment processes. Other types of events held were virtual international careers fairs and even overseas Careers Fairs.

Alumni

One respondent I spoke with discussed using their alumni as sources of overseas LMI. Case studies are provided on their websites relating to how alumni have sourced jobs in various countries and advice from these alumni. This may not only help current students but also prospective ones.

Skype careers support

This was a unique approach undertaken by one respondent I interviewed who reported that they had developed links with a university in America. American students studying in the UK institution, who are looking to go back and work in America, can contact an American Careers Adviser for advice via Skype. This support is then provided for UK students at the American institution wishing to work in the UK. This ensures more country specific careers support for the student about working in their home country.

Collaboration with other universities

One respondent mentioned in their interview that a number of universities have been collaborating for several years to provide careers fairs in China. Further to this, universities in the East Midlands have formed a partnership whereby they hold recruitment events for international students with local employers. They also provide regional training events for careers staff, hold careers fairs in China and India and produce a number of other resources[3].

University of Exeter: a case study

Having reviewed the various approaches to careers provision for international students, both in the UK and overseas, I was keen to undertake more in depth research into a single institution. I carried this out using semi structured interviews with staff from the University of Exeter, a focus group with current international students, institutional documentation and a questionnaire sent out to all international students. These methods enabled me to understand more clearly the views and opinions of both students and staff with regards to the services on offer. My own experiences and knowledge, working within the careers service, have also helped to inform this case study. My findings are presented in relation to students and grouped according to topic, followed by staff.

Students

I used the data from the student interviews, survey and focus groups to interpret the views of international students around the careers provision provided to them by the Careers service (known as the 'Career Zone' at Exeter). High levels of satisfaction with the Career Zone were expressed, however, despite these high satisfaction rates, when asked about any further support they would like some common themes emerged.

UK labour market information

Five students requested more information about the UK market place, the recruitment schedule and placements.

Part-time work

Two students commented on the need for more help with finding part-time work. One student stated that she, and a number of friends, lacked confidence and knowledge in finding part-time work in the UK. It was suggested that more information around the process for finding part-time work, as well as the culture of the UK work environment, could help to build their confidence and support them in securing part-time roles which could ultimately improve their employability.

Advertising the service

One student felt that the Career Zone should be advertised better as they were not aware of it.

Masters students

One Masters student responded that she would like to have been involved in programmes the university offers such as Ex-Factor[4] and the Career Mentor Scheme[5]. Further to this, given the short time period that Masters students are at the university, another suggestion was to provide a package of information from the Career Zone to students before joining. The main recruitment period in the UK is September to November but this is the Masters students' first few months at university, when they are just settling in, and need time to adapt to studies and get used to the different recruitment process to their home country.

Advertisement of jobs

Another student suggested advertising jobs that state specifically if they accept international students to help students know who to apply to.

3 Information received from Careers and International Student Advisers Workshop, run by AGCAS and UKCISA, 24th April 2013.

4 A two day employability programme for first year students.

5 A one-to-one career mentoring programme for second year students.

Staff

Nine interviews with staff from relevant departments were undertaken to further draw out some of the issues being faced with supporting international students in a careers capacity.

Global employability team

This team was created initially to develop global placements and links with employers, however their remit has grown to include providing one to one support for all students around finding opportunities and understanding the global market place. An issue they are facing at present is that the boundary between their remit and the Careers Consultants can be unclear at times. This was reported by the respondent, and is also something I face as a challenge in my role as a Careers Consultant, as students have sometimes been passed between the two teams, demonstrating that clarity around this is needed. Also, there is a mistaken assumption that the team specifically support international students given their involvement in global aspects.

Work experience and placements

An Employability Officer (EO) stated that one of the issues she faces in trying to help international students is finding and securing work placements. The majority of international students on the course were struggling to secure placements and so were dropping the placement element. The EO found these students struggled with knowledge of British work place culture, how to go about seeking work and that their CVs varied greatly in quality. It was suggested that more focus on these elements could help address these problems. The Employer Liaison Officer, working centrally in the Career Zone to support work placements, commented on the difficulties faced in trying to advertise placements fairly for international students who wish to know which placements will or will not accept international students. Stating this on a job advert could run the risk of discrimination, however, if it is not made clear who is eligible then students become frustrated by taking the time to apply for positions they find out later they are not eligible for.

The Business School

The Business School currently has the highest proportion of international students on campus. It was suggested by a member of the Business School careers team that more careers support needs to be offered for Masters students by the central Career Zone, as much of the information provided is aimed at undergraduates. When asked about areas they felt international students may be struggling with, several were identified. The first was a lack of knowledge of the employer culture in the UK and confidence in finding work. Further issues included language as a potential barrier to international students finding placements in the UK, along with the different recruitment cycles students may come across, depending on where they were applying for a placement.

International student support (ISS)

My respondent stated that the team run workshops on UK visa regulations for international students and also provide support on their website about working in the UK during studying, with links to the part-time work section of the Career Zone website. An employability workshop was run for the first time this year, in conjunction with the Career Zone, specifically for international students. The event proved to be successful and had strong attendance figures, suggesting a requirement for specific workshops for international students.

International alumni relations

The University has an alumni team, known within the institution as DARO. One member of staff reported that international alumni are keen to get involved but staffing shortages within DARO make it tricky to manage this effectively. In the past, DARO has held career panels overseas in Hong Kong and Greece and would ideally like to do more. It is also keen to look into alumni to alumni support, webinars and alumni guide books to help support their alumni. The input of the Career Zone into these has been limited to date but more involvement could be beneficial to help improve resources for alumni. At present, the Career Zone currently offer help to all alumni up to 3

years after graduation however there are no specific resources for international students. Development of online resources specifically for international alumni could be seen as something the University can give back that in turn will persuade alumni to have more involvement with the university.

International Office (IO)

In speaking with the IO, one member of staff stated that they had noticed a marked increase in the number of questions around employability from students and agents. To help manage this, they suggested more support from the Career Zone through including information into their presentations, particularly pre-departure briefings, about the services on offer. Also, introducing workshops for students on working in the UK (e.g. seeking the right employer and identifying employers in key markets) could be beneficial along with case studies of international alumni. Questions on placements, internships and careers fairs in the UK are often asked so regular updates or information from the Career Zone to the IO would be beneficial. It also became apparent that the International Officers build up a great wealth of knowledge about their market places which could potentially be used in some way to help our international students once they join us and inform our career provision through sharing of information.

Recommendations for Exeter

- Appoint an international careers specialist in the Careers Consultants team to be a link between the various other departments at the University who deal with international students.
- Develop workshops on working in the UK in collaboration with International Student Services to provide advice on visas.
- Provide further support for Masters students and make them aware of career planning needs before starting course.
- Review the global information provided on the website and look to develop certain country specific web pages.
- Develop more links with the International Office to see where services could support each other more.
- Utilise alumni more and create profiles of international alumni on the website for current and prospective students to review.
- Access training opportunities for staff in the Career Zone to improve knowledge of overseas information.
- Seek regular feedback from international students on service provisions.
- Run further employability workshops for international students specifically.

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Surprised by success: An interim evaluation of an international career development programme

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Career guidance professionals and employability teachers aim to develop graduate employability characteristics in response to employer and CBI demands for 'future fit' graduate entrants to the labour market (CBI 2009). Part of this 'future fitness' relies on a global outlook and 'cultural agility' (AGR, CIHE, CFR 2011). The 'Start your International Career' programme at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) aims to promote and develop global career awareness and graduate capacities. A case study approach was used to examine the experience from the first cohort to seek out indications of potential effective practice to benefit teachers and careers professionals working in this subject area. Positive outcomes suggest that an incentivised and diverse programme can build international career awareness and global work competencies.

Introduction

As a career guidance professional and employability lecturer, I believe I can support students and graduates in 'being and becoming' (Barnett 2012: 76). I want them to be confident and competent career starters. Recently at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), we have been 'surprised' by the success of a particular employability programme, designed to encourage graduates to be more globally aware. This article will explore and discuss the ingredients of this programme and its outcomes, in order to understand why and whether it was successful and how this can be developed and shared. I will be sharing insights on behalf of the team who organised this programme.

Employability and career management courses and workshops within higher education are part of the landscape of the student experience and their learning. Most universities offer embedded employability learning within courses as well as *ad hoc* optional provision through careers services and other career enhancement schemes. Lack of student engagement with these initiatives is the constant lament from many of those with an interest in employability and career development for students and graduates. Graduates are accused of lacking 'future fitness' (CBI 2009) and it is argued that UK graduates are geographically narrow in their career aspirations, with regard to the global labour market (Guardian 2011; AGR, CIHE, CFE 2011).

Employability itself, as a concept and as a measure of graduate success, is a slippery, misleading and often misunderstood term. However for the purposes of this review, I have chosen the following definition, as it encompasses the broad understanding of employability most often agreed upon as:

> a set of achievements, skills, understandings and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations.
>
> (Jones cited in Future Fit CBI 2009)

The programme at the University of Central Lancashire, entitled 'Start your International Career' was prompted by an awareness of the employability needs of both home and international students. The programme team wanted to offer a globally relevant employability learning experience through a series of interactive workshops, led by different teachers and speakers. While some sessions were led by university staff from the careers and employability service,

other invited, external speakers were chosen for their expertise in certain international careers topics. The overall aim of the programme was to support the development of global career awareness and the skills and attributes demanded by the global job marketplace. Trialled throughout February and March 2013, there were fourteen, hour-long workshops offered on the following topics.

The International Career programme – workshops

- Global graduate employability
- Developing entrepreneurial skills for an international career
- Teaching abroad – talking TEFL
- Working in the US and Canadian summer camps
- Emotional intelligence and graduate employability
- Boost your job prospects with work experience in China
- Commercial awareness for international careers
- Business culture and etiquette in the Arab world
- Gaining international experience whilst in Preston
- Getting an international internship in the UK
- Getting a job abroad
- Career start China
- Creating CVs and covering letters for global careers
- Erasmus work placements

Motivating students to attend

A major concern at the outset was whether we could entice students to attend a programme of workshops additional to their main area of study. As an incentive and added benefit for those who attended, there was the opportunity to apply for a range of overseas work placements organised through UCLAN and partners to supplement and complement the aims of the programme. This incentivisation aspect was explicitly indicated in promotional material. Only students who attended three workshops or more were entitled to apply for specific funded work placements abroad. These had been sourced through the UCLan International Office and by staff involved in organising the programme. These funded placements, thirteen in total, were located in Cyprus (at the UCLAN Cyprus campus), in China at UCLan China (Shanghai) and SIFT (Shanghai International Foreign Trade), in China and in Thailand (Teaching English through English Teaching Abroad) and in France (at the Nimes Chamber of Commerce). There were an additional four internships in the UK for international students, who wanted a UK specific placement.

Methodology for evaluation

The organising team wanted to assess the available attendance and review data from the programme to evaluate whether we could count this as a 'success'. A key limitation was the absence of formal student evaluation form evidence. This was an error in the planning stage and while all speakers commented on the enthusiasm and engagement of the students in workshops (informal evaluation evidence), we failed to organise end of workshop evaluations. Nonetheless it was decided that available data and opportunistic sampling was still worthwhile for this review process.

Four key areas were the focus:

1. Content of workshops
2. Attendance at workshops
3. The student perspective
4. The staff perspective

At one level, these questions are problematic to answer in any definitive way. However the purpose of the case study approach was to explore areas of the programme experience to seek out hints of potential effective practice to benefit teachers and careers professionals working in this subject area. This initial review does not claim to arrive at definitive judgments, due to limitations in terms of evaluation data. Nonetheless it was considered worthwhile to assess the programme effectiveness in an interim way and a decision was taken to pursue unavailable data for a future evaluation at a later date. For this article we focused on the existing, preliminary data.

I was keen to interpret what I could from available

data, because I simply wanted to understand whether it was possible to 'teach' or prompt global employability development in students. The motive for considering attendance figures was not to prove or even suggest any kind of quantitative validity but rather to track initial interest and continued attendance as a qualitative indicator of engagement. As a broadly qualitative review, I decided to give weight to 'soft' indicators (Mazey 2004, Dewson, Eccles, Tackey and Jackson 2000) which suggested effectiveness of the programme as a whole. Initially I chose to weigh up programme content against the competencies recommended by the AGR Global Graduates study (AGR *et al* 2011). As formal student evaluation data for each workshop was not available, attendance and ongoing willingness to attend more than one workshop were rated as indicators of satisfaction. Student perspectives were considered from the viewpoint of continued and persistent attendance and success in the competition for overseas placements. It was hoped that attendance at workshops would make them perform better in the interview process for the limited number of placements. Finally staff perspectives on the experience of the programme were assessed and reflected upon.

Evaluation of evidence

1. Content of workshops

The graduate global outlook or mindset championed by many employers and by AGR *et al* (2011) goes beyond multilingual ability and cultural awareness. Increasingly, global mindedness is being classified as a rich patchwork of characteristics, encompassing the usual graduate career skills (teamwork, problem solving, communication, time management, IT skills, numeracy, customer awareness - Prospects online) as well as additional 'global competences'. The authors argue that universities should be encouraging additional international awareness, and supporting the development of more globally relevant employability attributes. AGR *et al* (2011) set out to explore global graduate employability and it seemed worthwhile to use the global competencies identified as a measure of the appropriateness of the content of the programme workshops.

Figure 1 provides an initial assessment of workshop content mapped against the required global competencies. The sequence of workshop titles came about through team discussions. The competencies did not form the basis for the choice of workshops selected for the programme. Only after the programme, did it occur to us to assess how and whether we had offered learning that might develop graduates, according to these required competencies. In fact as we recalled our initial planning meetings, we realised that the selection of workshop titles was somewhat random and principally based on expertise and interest within the team. Nonetheless, in our review it seemed useful to compare workshop titles and broad content against the competencies to determine whether there was alignment.

Below is the basic comparison review, which is subject to assumptions I have made on session/ workshop plan content rather than observations of the actual sessions. In considering the fourteen session plans, it was clear that the most common theme lay in encouraging a more global mindset and the development of globally required employability skills. This was indicated in the aims and objectives for each session, activities and summaries.

Broadly, it appears that most competencies were matched by workshop content in a reasonably aligned way. It appeared that the full programme acted as a regular and persistent encouragement to more globally minded thinking. For example, in the workshop 'Global graduate employability', students were prompted to reflect on employability in a global context and to consider whether they were suited to 'going global'. In 'Developing entrepreneurial skills for an international career' the focus was on expectations of global employers and self-employment with an international perspective. The 'Emotional Intelligence (EI) and global graduate employability' workshop centred on developing students' awareness of EI and how it is a key aspect of global graduate employability. Cultural awareness and 'cultural agility' (AGR *et al* 2011) within the workshop 'Boost your job prospects with work experience in China' developed students' awareness of working life in Asia. Similarly, the workshop 'Business culture and etiquette in the Arab world' aimed to strengthen understanding of the Arab business environment. The 'Getting a job abroad'

	Global competency	Workshop/title	Alignment/Match
1	A global mindset – the ability to see the world from a 'cosmopolitan viewpoint'	• Global Graduate Employability • Emotional Intelligence and Graduate Global Employability	Good
2	Global knowledge – knowledge of global business activity	• Global Graduate Employability • Emotional Intelligence and Graduate Global Employability • Commercial awareness • Developing Entrepreneurial Skills for an International Career	Good
3	Cultural agility – the ability to understand the perspectives of individuals from different cultures… the ability to cope with and adapt to living in different environments.	• Business Culture and Etiquette in the Arab World • Emotional Intelligence and Graduate Global Employability	Good
4	Advanced communication skills – the ability to communicate effectively (speaking, listening and presenting) with others from around the world, and where required, communicate in a native language	• Working in US and Canadian Summer Camps • Emotional Intelligence and Graduate Global Employability	Partial
5	Management of complex interpersonal relationships – the ability to manage relationships with diverse teams and clients from across the globe	• Boost your Job Prospects with Work Experience in China • Emotional Intelligence and Graduate Global Employability	Partial
6	Team working and collaboration – the ability to work collaboratively and empathically with diverse teams across the globe	• Emotional Intelligence and Graduate Global Employability	Not covered explicitly
7	Learning Agility – the ability to rapidly assimilate knowledge	• Getting a Job Abroad • Creating Effective CVs and • Cover Letters for the Global Labour Market • ERASMUS work placements • Getting an International Internship in the UK • Getting International Experience whilst in Preston • Boost your Job Prospects with Work Experience in China	Good
8	Adaptability, flexibility, resilience, drive and self-awareness	• Emotional Intelligence for Graduate Global Employability	Good

Figure 1: Alignment of workshop content to global competencies

workshop tested students' existing knowledge of the global labour market through interactive exercises that challenged them to consider the major, well known global employers comparing and contrasting them with less recognisable international organisations and companies.

A common teaching strategy, employed within all these workshops, was to assess students' initial awareness of global employability and the demands of an internationalised labour market. The focus then moved to extending and building knowledge and allowing students to assess their own capacity and skills gaps. As the programme progressed, each workshop aimed to re-enforce previous learning and consolidate knowledge. There was evidence from session plans that learning activities were designed to allow peer to peer learning: for example, through mixing international, EU and UK students and allowing them to share knowledge through pair and group discussions. From a critical perspective, the absence of anything explicit within the programme design on team and collaborative working is notable. This seems on reflection to be the major gap or misalignment in terms of topics covered.

Figure 2: Range of subject disciplines studied by students attending the programme

2. Attendance at workshops

This programme was intensively marketed and promoted to students and resulted in a high level of bookings (761), 421 separate attendances at individual workshops and 202 individual students participating. While the majority did not gain a placement (there were only thirteen placement opportunities altogether) the attendance figures on their own suggest that the programme engaged the students in some way. It may be that they were attracted by the prospect of developing knowledge and awareness of the global attributes, required for an international career, but it could also be assumed that the opportunity to 'win' a placement abroad was more than likely a significant motivation. Students attending came from a wide range of subject disciplines (see Figure 2) with just over 50 per cent of students from the UK compared to EU and other international students.

The achievement of 700 plus bookings was due to immense effort from a large cross-university team but suggests that intensive marketing through myriad, standard channels and through vigorous and persistent social media bursts (Facebook, Twitter) was effective. Nonetheless, the conversion of bookings to turn-up rate at workshops was just over 50 per cent (421 separate attendances over 14 workshops) and suggests that sign-up enthusiasm waned. As it was, group sizes for workshops were ideal and manageable and sign-up wastage was possibly fortuitous.

So, it could be questioned whether claims of 'success' for this programme were demonstrated by the bookings and attendance figures (the marketing of the programme) or whether this was, to any degree, a pedagogic success. We would argue that in the context of other career related workshops across UCLan, this was a triumph in terms of marketing *and* engagement of students. Although students were required to come to at least three to be eligible to apply for placements, the consistent, repeat attendance hints at satisfaction. It was made clear to all who attended that there were only a small number of placement opportunities and it seems likely that this minor incentive could not be sufficient reason for the sustained attendance figures. 72 students altogether attended over three workshops (the minimum required to apply for the paid placements), 36 out of that 72 attended over four workshops, with some attending seven to nine workshops. This required them to have been tempted in the first place, attend a first workshop and, encouraged by the experience, to keep on attending. It seems reasonable to claim that, given the lack of engagement by students with other employability events and workshops, this sustained attendance indicated satisfaction with the programme.

3. Student perspectives

The staff team broadly agreed that student engagement in terms of continued attendance at workshops was the primary indication of student satisfaction. However, frequent and unsolicited commentary at the end of workshops and limited student interviews after the programme end, suggested that the content and the teaching approach of the programme was effective. The sample of student perspectives considered, based on convenience sampling due to the absence of formal evaluation evidence, offered consistent commentary from student sources that this programme had prompted new career thinking and a more global awareness.

The following commentary from a successful student is just one example of the positive experience offered by the placement and how it linked to the programme and the competences.

> I was so pleased to gain an internship as a marketing assistant at UCLan Cyprus. This was an amazing experience. I attended a great many of the workshops on the International programme and believe this prepared me with the knowledge I needed to make the most of this experience. The placement experience itself opened my eyes to what is available in the wider international labour market and this has encouraged me to think bigger.

I asked this student to self-evaluate her own employability against the eight global competences after the programme and placement. The student stated that she had developed a more 'global mindset', that she could 'adapt and adjust' to another culture, had developed 'learning agility' and proved to herself that she could 'deal with quick changes'. Other post placement interviews indicated similar development

as a result of the programme and /or placement experience.

4. Staff perspectives

Teacher/guest speaker comments (contemporaneous and six months after the programme) were considered for this review. Principally, workshop teachers or experts commented on the fact that international, EU and UK students were keen to learn from one another and showed themselves to be globally curious. The evidence suggested strongly that workshops were the trigger for UK and international students to mix and learn from one another. It also indicated that participants were fascinated with the prospect of adding a global dimension to their career aspirations and were enthusiastic about developing these additional global competencies. For instance, Teacher A commented:

An example of peer to peer learning in the 'Get a Job Abroad' workshop was an icebreaker activity which required students to network to find a student from a country they would like to work in. Once they had paired or grouped up, they were asked to 'interrogate' each other about the job market in their contrasting countries. This worked well to set the workshop off with a buzz and feedback from groups or pairs to the whole group proved that it had tapped into existing group knowledge, allowing it to be cascaded to the others.

This is just one example of the unique advantage offered by the mix of UK and international students attending workshops. Most teachers or experts were able to capitalise on the knowledge of participants, allowing them to share experience and develop a global outlook through prompted conversations and paired exercises. This suggests to me that global employability skills were developed through the inter-cultural experience of the programme.

Those successful in gaining a work placement were regarded by the staff team as particular successes from the programme. The competitive selection process for the overseas placements was organised and delivered by staff who were predominantly not involved in the programme. They assessed student CVs and interview performance in terms of suitability for placement selection. As a result of considering those selected against those who failed to gain a placement, it was evident from interviews with staff that the programme had successfully prepared these selected students. For those who failed in this competitive process, feedback on their performance added a useful extension to their learning on the programme.

The workshop on emotional intelligence and global employability (based on the work of Mayer and Salovey (1997)) was repeated twice due to demand and added a strong psychological dimension to the programme. The workshop teacher stated that students found interesting links between emotional intelligence and global graduate employability:

> [Students] had no difficulties in making connections between the two concepts and were encouraged to share examples of experiences from their different cultural backgrounds.

This peer learning aspect of the teaching approach was reflected in other workshops and commented on by other teachers.

Tentative findings

It seems important to emphasise that the programme was well thought out in terms of planning and content and rather poorly planned in terms of evaluating effectiveness. We only decided to review this programme once it had ended and did not give sufficient forethought at the outset to setting up evaluation mechanisms to generate or collect data while the programme was running. Data available was very much a convenience or opportunistic sample based on interviews with a few students and staff.

There is, therefore, no claim to rigour in how we approached this, except that we were opportunistic about noticing small indicators of success that will inform future programmes. The 'success' that most surprised us initially centred around the unusually high sign up and actual attendance figures but further into the programme we began to notice that, rather by chance, we had managed to do something potentially valuable.

I would propose that from this initial review we seemed to have almost chanced upon a successful

model of delivery and employability content that served to attract students and engage them. It would seem that global competencies recommended by the AGR study were broadly covered and that this provided an interesting series of workshops that built learning about the requirements of the global workplace. It is reasonable to argue that the placement experience was the finishing touch to this programme; however, other participants without the placement experience still seem to have benefited from the learning opportunity. There is evidence from student commentary that more globally focused career aspirations were developed; however, it could be argued that the group of students attracted to this programme were already globally minded.

As a member of the programme team, this seemed to me to be a worthy and valuable endeavour and all team members enjoyed being part of an innovatory project. It was to a degree, however, patched together in a haphazard way and any success was probably due to a sweetly naïve eagerness on the part of those who planned this. By chance it worked. We have all learnt something about the need for planning for evaluation, as well as delivery, in learning and development. The title for this article 'Surprised by success' occurred to me because I realised how lucky we were to achieve what we did given our lack of rigour regarding evaluation planning. We would hope that, notwithstanding these flaws, it can offer some insight and inspiration to others involved in employability education. We believe it is something that deserved an interim evaluation and this will inform future programmes.

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The global graduate: Developing the global careers service

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Graduate employability is an international issue. Students seek a higher education experience with added value in terms of employability and an international perspective. The University of Nottingham, an established global university with campuses in Malaysia and China, attracts students from across the world. These students have diverse and culturally-specific career development needs, requiring skilled practitioners with knowledge of the global graduate opportunity structure. Using a case study approach this article explores ways in which the Careers and Employability Services are being developed to meet a global market through support for staff and internationalised employer engagement.

Introduction

The OECD (2013) suggests that the pursuit of higher level studies by students in countries other than their own supports them to expand their knowledge of cultures and languages and better equips them in managing an increasingly globalised labour market. It estimates that the number of students enrolling outside their country increased to 4.3 million in 2011; the largest numbers of foreign students are from China, India and Korea. This increase represents not just the globalisation of economies but also the expansion of higher education around the world. Part of this expansion is due to the number of universities developing branch campuses overseas which allow students to access an international education without leaving their home country (Waldavsky, 2010).

The University of Nottingham in the UK (UNUK) has a long-standing commitment to internationalisation, in 2012/13 of the 34,000 students on the UK campus 27% were international. The development of the overseas campuses started in 2000 when the University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus (UNMC) was opened. It has over 4,800 students, 29% of whom are non-Malaysian. The University of Nottingham Ningbo Campus (UNNC) was opened in China in 2004, it has 6,300 students, 9% are non-Chinese (International Office, University of Nottingham, 2013). Between them the campuses offer a wide range of courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level ranging from Plant Biotechnology, Pharmacy and Computer Science, to Business and Management, Education and European Studies, with applied subjects in the majority.

Taking a case study approach this paper explores some of the challenges that have been experienced in developing consistent but culturally specific careers services across three international campuses within one institution. The case study comprised of interviews with key stakeholders on the three campuses including senior managers, careers staff, students and employers. It also utilised strategic documents such as University of Nottingham Strategic Plan (2010) which emphasised career development for all students. The process that facilitated the various dialogues and strategies has been conceptualised as a model we term the 'Nottingham Journey'.

Careers service provision

We believe that becoming an international university and attracting large numbers of students to all three campuses requires globally-minded services which underpin and complement the academic element of the experience. Careers services therefore need to meet the disparate employability needs of students from a wide range of countries and backgrounds. A particular issue for all the services is international students wanting to establish their career in the country they have studied in.

Careers services in universities in Malaysia and China are less well established than those in the UK. However the expansion of tertiary education and graduate employability has contributed to an increased focus in this area. In particular in China, graduate employability continues to be a problem with the increase in graduate jobs unable to keep pace with the number of graduates (Sun and Yuen, 2012). While in Malaysia, unemployment for graduates within six months of completing their studies is identified as an issue (Sirat, Heng, Shuib, Rahman, Kamil and Singh, 2012). This is attributed to poor language skills, particularly in English and lack of knowledge and competency in applying for jobs (Darmi and Albion, 2013).

The University of Nottingham context

The University of Nottingham provides careers services on all three campuses. Each provide a range of services including careers advice and guidance, labour market information, career planning and employer focused activities. Both UNNC and UNMC have their own careers services which, in line with the size of the campuses, operate on a much smaller scale, delivering a similar range of services to those in the UK. In the overseas campuses each careers team is line managed locally. However, the lack of an established national culture around the delivery of careers education and guidance impacts on initial training and professional development for practitioners.

The longevity of the UK service enables it to provide support by bringing sector specific expertise to the development of strategic direction and service delivery. Strong relationships have been established with the overseas team to support the development of services. When Nottingham students, encouraged to be internationally mobile, decide to study part of their course at a different campus, they expect to see a level of consistency in the approach and style which is adopted. Therefore support in establishing a consistent level of service which is culturally and contextually appropriate can be a challenge. It is never appropriate to 'lift' an intervention in the UK and assume it will be appropriate overseas. Sultana (2009) explores the issues around lending and borrowing policies across countries. The issues are equally pertinent to multinational organisations where there may be an expectation that knowledge and practice which works in one context can be easily transplanted. It is vital to acknowledge what Sultana calls the 'cultural and social anchorage' of practice and how this needs to be context specific (Sultana, 2009:12).

Conceptualising the Nottingham Journey Model

The Nottingham Journey from three distinct services to one global careers service can be conceptualised with reference to Tuckman's stages of team development (Tuckman, 1965) Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing, and is illustrated here:

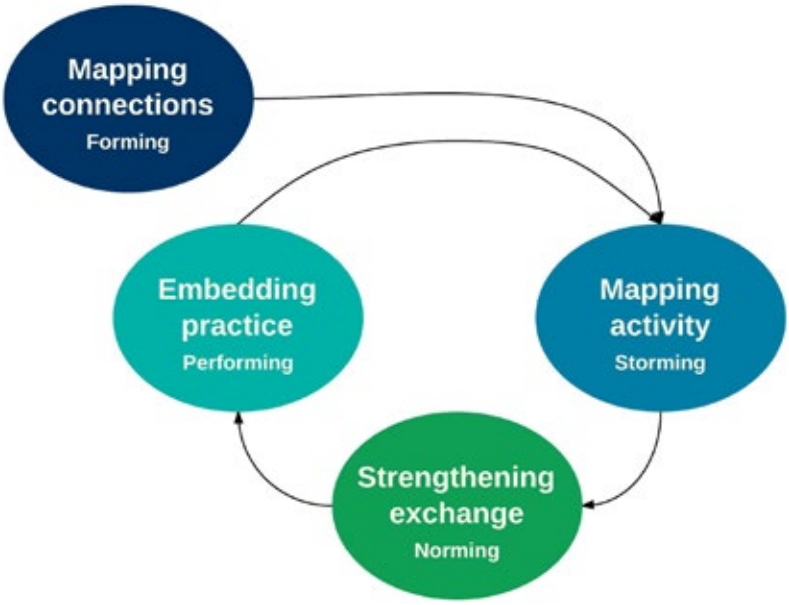

Figure 1:
The Nottingham Journey adapted from Tuckman (1965)

On reflection, the journey and relationship development has been defined within four incremental stages, building an interrelated process to underpin service developments. The model has four interrelated stages, making connections, mapping activity, strengthening exchange and embedding practice. These are explored in more depth below.

Making connections

This was the 'forming' element of the journey which involved visits overseas by the UK senior team in order to understand the local landscape and visits from the UNNC and UNMC Service Managers to UNUK. It was important to develop mutual understanding through which benefits of closer working could be identified, in order to reflect the University approach of collaboration through shared agendas rather than management directives. This period of relationship building over four years was supported by monthly Skype conversations between the Careers Manager on each campus and a member of the UK leadership team. Additionally discussions with line managers provided an important link with local and emerging policies. This has ensured that discussions around opportunities for services development are in line with local development activities. Once the team had 'formed' and a good and productive working relationship was developed, the next stage was to explore service delivery in context. At this stage consideration was given to identifying the similarities and differences particularly in terms of the local, political and cultural requirements.

Mapping activities

The 'Storming' phase aimed to better understand and support the development of the local career services in UNMC and UNNC through a series of mapping activities. These visits from the UK Campus to UNMC and UNNC allowed time with the local team to share current practice in the UK and develop service strategies considering all elements of information, advice and guidance alongside employer engagement. These contributed to a better understanding of both the services and the context in which the services were delivered. The model of delivery therefore was devised through negotiation and partnership working rather than imposing the model of practice used in the UK.

The visits were supported by discussions with the delivery teams and with campus stakeholders including students, academics, alumni, support services and employers. This dialogue helped to identify what was working well and how the knowledge and expertise from the UK could be shared to enhance existing practice rather than be deployed as best practice.

These visits resulted in the formulation of two distinct work packages which were developed in partnership with the local teams. The first addressed training needs identified by the teams *in situ*, resulting in the establishment of a continuing professional development (CPD) programme which included refresher training in careers guidance and mentoring support. Delivering careers guidance training within differing cultural contexts requires the concept of careers guidance to be examined and potentially reframed (Neary, 2013). Models of delivery which have been developed within a liberal, non-directive and individual focused culture (Watts, 1996) may have less resonance. As such the importance of understanding and recognising the cultural context is essential. Presenting what might work in the UK is helpful but deconstructing what might be the issues for the local context helps both to build an understanding of what may be transferable and what adaptation might be needed to support a localised approach. For example for many students career decision making is not an individual choice, but one where parents or other family members may have a dominant voice. Recognising who influences and informs the decision may take a higher order position within the careers dialogue.

The second work package focused on strategic developments which had been identified jointly with the local teams through a series of facilitated workshops. Making connections and mapping activities were an important backdrop for the strategic development work. Given the small teams on the overseas campuses, the focus was understandably operational, with a relatively short planning horizon. There was a willingness to engage in new initiatives, but the approach was predominantly reactive. With

limited resource, the need for careful prioritisation was paramount. The UK Senior Team guided the overseas teams through the strategic planning process in a series of collaborative workshops. These sessions provided space to examine and explore 'blue sky' thinking for service development while pragmatically acknowledging local policy requirements. Each of the key stakeholder groups of students, alumni and faculty were considered with priorities for the next 24 months identified. As well as making it easier to track progress and re-prioritise as necessary, this facilitated an understanding as to where support from the UK team might be beneficial.

In some instances the developments were quite operational, for example, a need was identified to review the messaging on some of the key marketing materials in order to manage the expectations of the students. In the subtlety of translating into English it is easy to inadvertently confuse the message for example suggesting attendance at a careers fair will lead to an internship. Colleagues have also trialled different formats of events, building on some of the experiences in the UK. It is intended that these smaller, more tailored events provide the forum for a more focused conversation between the student and the employer. This took the form of a 'Spotlight on Engineering' event, with a panel of employers in attendance, presenting their experiences and allowing for a Question and Answer style session. This was then followed by opportunities for networking. A development for the longer term will be for overseas colleagues to work more closely with colleagues in faculty around employability issues. This will allow local needs and priorities to shape the level of provision both through integration in the curriculum and stand-alone careers provision. As part of this, consideration is being given to reviewing the data on student engagement and targeting those harder to reach student groups including international students.

Strengthening exchange

We define strengthening exchange by the opportunity to develop activities which actively support interoperability across all campuses. This was the 'norming' phase of the process. Recent research produced by High Fliers (2014) identified Nottingham, as the university most heavily targeted by graduate employers. A gap was identified in the ability to respond to and maximise the benefit of global connections. Colleagues were fully occupied in responding to incoming requests to their own campus, but did not have the capacity to respond on a timely basis and fully investigate the potential of incoming referrals. We felt that in order for a recruiter to seriously consider targeting the University of Nottingham (wherever they are based) a face to face conversation is required. Higher Education Institutions in the UK face an issue with brand awareness overseas. Anecdotally, there is evidence that unless those responsible for graduate recruitment overseas have either successfully recruited alumni, or have had an overseas education, they may view someone with an international education with scepticism.

This issue led to the establishment of the Global Labour Market Team, with one individual based in each of the UK, Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur) and China, (Shanghai). The team has been in place since April 2013. These colleagues have a defined remit and two of their key objectives are:

- To bring a global perspective to all of our employer relationships (where appropriate) ensuring that in-country connections can be proactively made and developed.
- To represent returning international students (wherever their 'home' campus is) and to work with employers to ensure that those studying overseas are in a position to access and apply for those vacancies in their home country (often recruitment timescales and methods make this challenging).

Whilst this team has not yet been in place a year, the benefits of this structure are becoming clear:

- A mechanism is now in place to advertise appropriate vacancies in all three countries and target relevant students by email. This can bring added value to those employers who value overseas education and want to ensure opportunities are advertised as broadly as possible.
- A deeper understanding has been gained of the recruitment methods and competencies

sought (which can vary between countries for the same employer). This intelligence then feeds directly into face to face work with students and to resources which are produced for students to access on-line. For example, our first Global Employability Conference in December 2013 was supported by labour market information supplied by the overseas member of the Global Labour Market team. In addition, a new 'Working in China' leaflet has been developed using the in-country intelligence.

- There are some employers who do not need to target universities in the UK because they already receive a high volume of applications. In the region of 8-10 of these organisations have specifically chosen to work more closely with Nottingham because of the tri-country presence and the international profile of the student body.

The Global Labour Market Team roles contribute significantly to supporting local careers teams to build employer relationships both nationally and internationally. Additionally their activities enhance students' perceptions of international career opportunities, particularly for those international students who have career goals which lie outside their home nation.

Embedding practice

The work undertaken to date has been fundamental in strengthening the exchange between the campuses. The priority now is to embed that practice so that we 'perform' as a team of three campus Careers Services taking into account the local context. A number of interventions have been undertaken or planned which support this priority:

- Weekly Skype meetings of the Global Labour Market Team in order to exchange information and share knowledge. Once a month, this meeting is chaired by a member of the UK Senior Team in order to focus on CPD Activities.
- Monthly Skype meetings continue with the Careers Manager on each campus. A particular focus of these meetings, based on a standing agenda and further to the work package focussing on strategic developments, has been to review progress against agreed milestones on a regular basis.
- The aforementioned CPD programme, including refresher training on careers guidance and mentoring support, was important in developing the professional practice of the local teams. The challenges of distance mean that it is harder to reinforce the training and review its effectiveness. A plan is being developed to introduce a Skype mentoring programme, linking overseas colleagues with Careers Advisers in the UK, with the purpose of offering support and on going learning and development. The concept of mentoring *per se* is less established overseas and so a structured programme is to be developed, ensuring that the purpose and expectations would be clear to both parties in the relationship.
- Following establishment of the mentoring programme, progress will be reviewed to consider whether there are other key linkages which need to be developed between overseas practitioners and their UK counterparts. This does occur naturally in some areas already and it is important to encourage it where there is an obvious benefit. However there is acknowledgement that overseas colleagues will have responsibility for several areas which in the UK will be owned by separate individuals or teams. This can sometimes cause challenges relating to resource and capacity.
- Practice is increasingly being embedded across the three services through the Global Labour Market Team proactively supporting students returning overseas after graduation through; ensuring students are aware of employers with whom the university have an established relationship with, encouraging employers to use video conferencing and other technologies to support overseas recruitment.

Beyond the careers services there are areas of activity where practice continues to strengthen across all three campuses. One example is the Nottingham Advantage Award, the University's co-curricular skills award, which is managed by the Careers and Employability Service. UNNC Careers

Service colleagues and the Award Manager at UNMC participate in Steering Group and moderation meetings which consider Award modules at all three campuses. Using the internal virtual learning environment (VLE), modules are being introduced which are simultaneously taken by students from all three campuses who take part in subject-themed on-line discussions. Work is also beginning between the three campuses to share best practice while undertaking a review of placement take-up and support.

Taking a broader view, Global Labour Market Team colleagues in Shanghai and Kuala Lumpur also liaise with the University's Business Engagement colleagues on the overseas campuses, mirroring the partnership that is established between the Careers and Employability Service and Business Engagement in the UK. This illustrates another dimension of the international campus challenge; the joining up of related activities within as well as across borders.

Conclusions

The University of Nottingham is committed to developing 'Global Graduates'. The Careers and Employability Services are facilitating this through an international focus with recruiters across the world. Collaboration and partnership working are fundamental to the three Careers and Employability Services and this has supported a balance between 'direction' from the UK to Malaysia and China and a collegial approach to building the service. This case study illustrates the importance of appropriate partnership building, the value of shared imperatives and the extent of the organisational commitment required to develop a cross-border careers service. This includes a sizeable investment in staff mobility, at least in the early stages, so that different cultural environments can be experienced and more deeply understood. This provides a valuable context for work to harmonise cross-border careers information, advice and guidance activities where it is culturally appropriate.

Finally, in considering the model of the Nottingham Journey presented here, the cyclical nature of the model supports continuing quality improvement.

The process is iterative, partnership working will continue as will engagement with stakeholder views. Both will contribute to embedding of practice that ensures systems work within their context and are not just a transplantation from the UK. As such the development of context specific models of career guidance can lead to a richness in professional practice which will contribute to the development of the UK based guidance service, most particularly in extending the knowledge and understanding of UK practitioners of the nuances of working with both international students and employers.

Students and graduates are the primary stakeholders of any careers service and their needs must be understood and met. We believe that a focus on building relationships, strategic capability, common professional interest and the enhancing of professional practice with staff across borders will deliver the global careers service.

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Acknowledgement

The authors would like to acknowledge the coaching and proof reading support of Professor Dawn Forman in the writing of this article.

Forthcoming NICEC events

Monday, 25th March 2014	5pm – 6.30pm
Seminar:	**Psychodynamic perspectives on career development** *Phil McCash and Janet Sheath (NICEC Fellows) and Steward Beever (Birkbeck)*
Location:	Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, Euston, London
Wednesday, 21st May 2014	2pm – 5pm
Network meeting:	**Employers, schools and careers: what constitutes effective engagement?**
Location:	TBA
Thursday, 26th June 2014	5pm – 6.30pm
Seminar:	**'It's more than just finding a job' - researching young people's views in an area of social and economic disadvantage** *Hazel Reid and Jane Westergaard (Canterbury Christ Church University)*
Location:	Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, Euston, London
Thursday, 26th June 2014	5pm – 6.30pm
Seminar:	**Do primary school children's career aspirations matter?** *Professor Eirini Flouri (London Institute of Education)*
Location:	Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, Euston, London

Costs: included in membership fees for NICEC Fellows and members. Seminars are charged at £20 and network meetings at £30 for non-members.

ABOUT THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

The Career Development Institute (CDI) is the UK-wide professional body for the career development sector. We have a rich heritage, bringing together the membership of ACEG, ACPi (UK); ICG and NAEGA to create a single voice for a diverse sector.

We have a key role to play in influencing UK skills policy as it affects those with whom career development practitioners work and a clear purpose to improve and assure the quality and availability of career development opportunities for all throughout the UK.

We have a strong and growing membership of individuals, students and affiliate organisations – all of whom subscribe to a Code of Ethics and are committed to continuous professional development. We are also the custodians of the UK Register for Career Development Professionals and the National Occupational Standards for the Career Development sector.

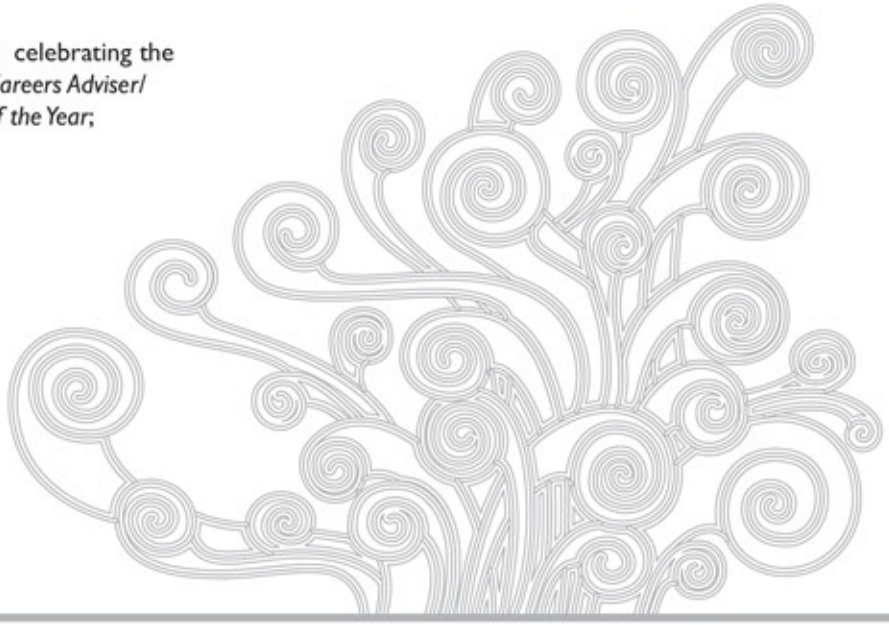
We have established:

- A powerful brand supported by an evolving website **www.thecdi.net**; social media (Twitter and LinkedIn) presence; and quarterly magazine *Career Matters*;
- A schedule of events and conferences based on a training needs analysis of members and an Annual Conference and Exhibition;
- A media presence with the CDI as the *expert voice* in the field; advising politicians, speaking at conferences and commenting on policy;
- The UK Career Development Awards celebrating the best in day to day practice, including *Careers Adviser/ Coach of the Year* and *Careers Teacher of the Year*;
- Business development success winning several major tenders including the National Occupational Standards and projects with the Skills Show;
- A platform for a career progression pathway for the sector.

The CDI has a critical role to play in setting standards and articulating what quality looks like for the sector. Importantly we are an awarding body, managing the Qualification in Career Guidance (Development in Scotland) and the UK Register for Career Development Professionals, which is pivotal to our ongoing quality agenda and is fast becoming recognised as the sector's equivalent to chartered status.

We are delighted to be working in partnership with NICEC on the Journal and future research-focused events in the career development sector and now have a seat on the NICEC Editorial Board.

The Journal will be distributed to all CDI members twice a year – with the April and October edition of *Career Matters*.



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