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.