

# A Beacon for Guidance

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How the International Centre  
for Guidance Studies has been  
influencing policy and practice  
for 16 years

Colin Hyde

# Closer Working?

Working relationships between  
Organisations and  
Careers Advisory Services



## CARE FOR BOYS AND

A PRACTICAL  
CHOICE OF TRA

1911  
1911



**The International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS)** is a research centre with expertise in career guidance and career development. The Centre conducts research, provides consultancy to the career sector, offers a range of training and delivers a number of accredited learning programmes up to and including doctoral level.

For further information see [www.derby.ac.uk/icegs/](http://www.derby.ac.uk/icegs/)

### **EMOHA**

The East Midlands Oral History Archive was originally funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2001 to establish the first large-scale archive of oral history recordings for Leicestershire & Rutland. This includes the collections of the former Leicester Oral History Archive, the Mantle archive from North West Leicestershire, the Community History archive of Leicester City Libraries, the Market Harborough Museum collection, and the sound archive of BBC Radio Leicester, along with smaller collections donated by local organisations or individuals.

For further information see [www.le.ac.uk/emoha](http://www.le.ac.uk/emoha)

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JH	Jo Hutchinson	CW	Chris Warren
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# Foreword

“It gives me great pleasure to introduce this history of the International Centre for Guidance Studies. iCeGS is one of the jewels in the crown of the University of Derby and exemplifies many of the values of the University.”

Last year the Centre celebrated its 15th year and the idea was hatched to commission this history. As the history shows, iCeGS has built its reputation as a world-class centre for career research and development. Over the last decade and a half its influence has steadily increased from the regional, to the national, to the international. Given the extent of its work, I doubt that there is anyone anywhere in the career development world who hasn't heard of the Centre or made use of its work.

iCeGS has tremendous expertise in the field of career development. The Centre and its staff have an encyclopaedic knowledge of career development in the UK and around the world and strong opinions on how the field should be best advanced. However, one of the Centre's key strengths is its ability to apply this expertise to a range of real world problems in different sectors and contexts. iCeGS works with schools, colleges, universities, businesses and a wide range of other institutions to develop understanding of career and demonstrate how individuals can be best supported to develop their own careers.

One of the Centre's key strengths has been its strong engagement in policy and practice. The academics in iCeGS do not sit in an ivory tower, they are constantly active in the world around them, informing politicians, training practitioners, lobbying for change and influencing policy. All of what they do is based on their strong understanding of the evidence, theory and practice of career development.

At the heart of all of iCeGS work is a strong commitment to the idea that every individual should be empowered to realise their potential and have a fulfilling career. Their conception of career is broad, encompassing life, learning and work and the path that individuals trace through these. These beliefs around empowering individuals, building skills for the workplace and fostering a commitment to lifelong learning chime perfectly with the values of the University of Derby. I commend both iCeGS and this history to you and anticipate that the next decade and a half will bring even more success.

**Professor John Coyne**





# CeGS

Centre for  
Guidance Studies

Promoting research & informing practice

PROFESSIONAL  
OCCUPATIONAL

iCeGS publications tackle issues relating to policy, practice and theory.

# Introduction

“I fervently believe that the career guidance profession has a future. Not only that: I believe it is a better future... Indeed, I believe it has a critical role to play if the new post-industrial era is to offer more fulfilling lives for more people than the industrial era has.”

Tony Watts' inaugural professorial lecture, 1998.

The South Tower at the University of Derby before its recent refurbishment.



## What is career guidance and why is it important?

The idea of providing professional support to help people to find jobs and develop their career dates back to the end of the nineteenth century when vocational guidance services began to appear in both the USA and Europe. In 1893 there were 25 public labour bureaux and 17 private bureaux operating nationally (Peck, 2004). After the Second World War a national Youth Employment Service was created for people up to the age of 18 (it also had responsibility for the administration of unemployment benefit for young people). By the 1950s many universities had developed careers services. Significant developments in schools and colleges followed in the 1960s and 1970s; in 1973 the Employment and Training Act turned the Youth Employment Service into a Careers Service and made it a statutory duty for Local Education Authorities (LEAs) to provide these services.

During the 1970s and 1980s the Careers Service, schools, colleges and universities began to branch out from the provision of one-to-one career and employment advice to develop career education and other services. This period also saw the beginning of the recognition that career development was a lifelong process, with the beginnings of publicly funded guidance for adults in the UK.

The increase in youth unemployment from the mid-1970s was an issue that came to dominate the work of the Careers Service during the 1980s and increased the workload of careers professionals, although the high levels of unemployment also had the effect of strengthening the bonds between education and work. Debates around adult guidance often focussed on which of several services should deliver it. David Peck quotes Terry Collins, then President of the Institute of Careers Guidance, as saying 1988/9 was a watershed for the following reasons: the arrival of the 'post-industrial age', a national curriculum in schools, a national network of education-business partnerships, associations of guidance practitioners sitting down together, and the arrival of Training and

“It’s about whether or not girls think that they can be engineers. Why it is that fewer boys study biology? What helps? What is it that informs kids’ ideas of themselves and what they think they can be, and what they’re allowed to be, and what they can’t be, and what just doesn’t figure in their thinking?”

JH

Enterprise Councils (TECs).

Entering the 1990s, the main concern was still youth unemployment (Peck, 2004). In 1991 the White Paper ‘Education and Training in the Twenty-First Century’ recommended removing LEA control of the Careers Service: against much opposition from the educational and guidance communities, this happened in 1994 when the careers service was “privatised” (though many of the contracts went to LEA/TEC partnerships).

The election of New Labour brought mixed blessings for the careers sector. On one hand, the Education Act 1997 made careers education a mandatory part of the school curriculum, and there was continued development of adult services; on the other, the move towards a new service, Connexions, saw career guidance being diluted within a more broadly based service targeted specifically at those at risk of social exclusion (Watts & Kidd, 2000).<sup>1</sup> By this time, the Centre for Guidance Studies had been born and was starting to engage with this rapidly shifting policy environment.

As this brief look at the history of the career sector demonstrates, the delivery of career support for young people and adults has been rife with twists and turns in policy and organisational structure. This “uncertain administrative framework” (Peck, 2004) has been a characteristic feature of career guidance throughout its UK history: it is arguable that this has been detrimental to the development of the field and the associated profession.

Nonetheless, throughout this complex history, the advocates of career guidance have continued to argue that the activity is important and make the point that it not only serves the individual, by helping people to clarify their life aims and move more purposefully towards achieving them, but also makes an important contribution to society. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2004) set out three main reasons why career guidance should be an important part of public policy: first, that it supports engagement with learning and improves the functioning of the education and training system; second, that it contributes to the effective operation of the labour market; and third, that

<sup>1</sup> The full history of the careers services in the UK is told in the book *Careers Services: History, Policy and Practice in the United Kingdom* by David Peck (2004). The story is also summarised in an article entitled “Guidance in the United Kingdom: past, present and future” (Watts & Kidd, 2000): this section is based largely on this paper.



John Hayes MP was a powerful advocate of career guidance within the Coalition Government. He gave the iCeGS Annual Lecture (albeit virtually) in 2010, but has since been reshuffled.

it supports the achievement of a fairer and more equitable society.

The kind of high-level support for career guidance set out by OECD still leaves many questions unanswered. There are many practical, political and theoretical issues that require further thought and research to ensure that career guidance can deliver its impacts effectively. For example, who should be responsible for delivering advice and guidance, and how should this be done? Is career guidance something that should be a part of every teacher's responsibility to their students? How much difference does formal/professional careers guidance make? How suited are some people for certain jobs? How does being in an unsuitable job affect an individual's quality of life? How much more productive might people be if they were in more suitable jobs? What are the best strategies for managing a fulfilling career?

It was to answer these and many other relevant questions that the need for an organisation such as the International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS) arose. The Centre was founded on a belief that the practice of career guidance and the policy that frames this practice should be grounded in solid evidence. The cry for 'evidence-based policy' has become a common one now, but iCeGS has been pursuing this agenda for over 15 years in the area of career education and guidance. The organisation's track record of research, engaging policy-makers, influencing practice and developing new theories and ideas is what is discussed and celebrated in this booklet.

The Centre for Guidance Studies (CeGS) (the 'i' for 'international' was added later) was born in a period of radical experimentation in the careers world in the aftermath of the election of the "New" Labour Government in 1997. The Centre has witnessed the birth and death of the Connexions Service and now the Centre is continuing to argue for evidence-based policy and practice in a very difficult political climate under the Coalition Government. The current environment for careers work is extremely challenging. However, the researchers based in iCeGS continue to make the argument that career education and guidance is a powerful tool, and that its relevance should be clearer than ever in the current climate of youth unemployment, public-sector cuts and marketisation of education. Against this complex backdrop it seems vital that iCeGS, along with others, continue to think about how to ensure that Government makes policy in this area in an informed and effective fashion.



## First Steps in Creating CeGS (1998)



Professor Roger Waterhouse was the Vice-Chancellor at the University of Derby and Chairman of Derbyshire Careers Service Limited

Left: Professor Tony Watts OBE, Visiting Professor at iCeGS

“We always lacked a sort of academic base. There were one or two, there was NICEC [National Institute for Career Education and Counselling], there were the training centres which trained careers advisors, quite an extensive network, but it always seemed to me that they didn’t really go – those training centres – where they might have gone and look hard at the theory, or even the practice, beyond training students to be careers advisers. So, there was a need for people around the sector who could look at the theoretical and academic side of the business. There was no academic institutional base for it.” DP

“This is an exciting development which demonstrates the future thinking of both the University and the Careers Consortium.” Professor Roger Waterhouse

The Centre for Guidance Studies (CeGS) was born out of a conversation between Tony Watts and Professor Roger Waterhouse in the autumn of 1996. Waterhouse was the Vice-Chancellor at the University of Derby and was also Chairman of Derbyshire Careers Service Limited, which worked with other careers services in the East Midlands within the East Midlands Careers Consortium. Outlining a variety of ways in which Tony Watts might work with the University, Roger Waterhouse wrote to him on 6 September 1996 saying that: “A different type of arrangement would have to do with providing you with a University base for your guidance work. I had in mind a unit, led by yourself, involving others... there was the possibility of your wishing to relocate part of your current activities or associate them organisationally with the University of Derby.”

Tony Watts had had a long and distinguished career in the field of careers guidance. Along with Adrian Bridgewater he had set up the Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC) in 1964, the history of which has been written about in detail in the book *Some Sort of Bridge* (Smith, 2010). Linked to CRAC, he had established the research organisation the National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling (NICEC) in 1975 and had driven the development of NICEC to enhance the evidence base



The East Midlands Consortium was one of the partners that created CeGS

for careers education and counselling (Smith, 2010). Many of the lessons that he learnt from NICEC were to inform the development of the new Centre at the University of Derby, and close links were to be established between the two organisations.

At the time there were five privatised careers services in the East Midlands who had formed the Careers Consortium Ltd. to further their interests:

“The Derbyshire Careers Service had very strong links with Derby University, so Roger Waterhouse was on the board of Derbyshire Careers Service. The five careers services in the East Midlands formed a consortium, and decided that we would co-operate and have joint products and joint initiatives and, particularly, we were interested in a research base that supported what we were doing and would strengthen us in the longer term for future competitive tenders. In discussion with Roger we decided that we would jointly create CeGS, so the university invested half, and the five consortium company members invested half, I think each of us contributed something like five thousand pounds in the first year.” **JP**

Tony Watts recalls that key players in the University also had a strong interest in the area of career guidance:

“The Chancellor was Sir Christopher Ball who had been head of one of the Oxford colleges. I knew him very well. We together started some discussions that led to the setting up of the Guidance Council, which brought together all the organisations in the field in the UK that had an interest in career guidance. Christopher was also the Chair of the NICEC Council and was enormously helpful to us in that role. We used to meet up regularly: he gave lots of his time. So, we had Roger as Vice-Chancellor with an interest because of his involvement in the Derbyshire Careers Service; Christopher as Chancellor being interested in this area too and feeling this was quite an interesting field in which not enough was being done. Both of them also felt that guidance was closely related to the University’s concern for extending access, and that as a teaching-led university it might be good to focus its research activities on distinctive areas related to the institution’s values. Christopher knew me, Roger knew of me, and I went for a chat and they were interested and they asked me whether I would set up a Centre. That’s how it started.” **TW**



Jean Pardoe OBE, Chair of the East Midlands Careers Consortium

In July 1997 a proposal was made to establish a Centre for Guidance Studies as a joint venture between the University of Derby and Careers Consortium Ltd. The Centre was to be a hub for lifelong guidance research and strategic thinking.

Due to his family and work commitments in Cambridge, Tony Watts did not want to manage the Centre on a daily basis, but he committed to a minimum of 20 days a year. He accepted an honorary doctorate from the University and became Visiting Professor of Career Development in 1998.

The establishment of the Centre was announced in the careers education and guidance journal *Newscheck* in November 1997. Jean Pardoe, Chair of the Careers Consortium, was quoted as saying, 'We are very hopeful that this partnership will have a significant impact on the value of careers guidance for the future'.

The Centre's business plan for 1998-2000 positioned it in relation to the new Labour Government's Education and Training Development Agenda, the University of Derby's commitment to "high-quality continuing education at all levels", and the Careers Consortium's commitment to developing a research base for its work:

"I wanted to see prestige. I wanted recognition that we were taking seriously the whole question about how we got best value out of public money, what worked, what didn't work and things that would actually shape the service that we were delivering. So what could we learn from what was happening both in terms of our own delivery, but increasingly on an international stage what could we learn that would actually improve what we did." JP

### **New Labour, new Centre**

The establishment of CeGS coincided with the first years of the new Labour Government. The Centre's business plan for 1998-2000 set out the position:

"The current government has clearly set out its proposals to reform education and training in order to drive up standards and to help meet the challenges of a knowledge-based society of the 21st century. The 1997-98 Education and Training Development Agenda outlines a series of new strategies and initiatives aimed at encouraging all people to recognise the need for lifelong learning and to maximise their own potential. Developing





careers education and guidance (CEG) is a key element within the government's strategy for raising aspirations and achievement, and tackling the issue of social exclusion.”

The primary focus of the Centre was to extend good practice in the field of guidance and to contribute to guidance research developments regionally, nationally and internationally. So at its inception CeGS was firmly determined to both relate to and influence national and international policy agendas. However, during this period CeGS also had a strong local and regional focus and worked in close partnership with the local careers companies to support the development of practice and to develop effective monitoring and evaluation processes.

This was summarised in the CeGS mission statement:

### **Centre for Guidance Studies: Mission Statement**

The Centre for Guidance Studies will:

- Create opportunities to enable organisations to identify and tackle research and guidance needs.
- Analyse and influence contemporary CEG developments within local, regional, national and international arenas.
- Provide fora to share and develop information for the benefit of all stakeholders within the guidance community.

From the start the Centre's aspirations were ambitious, with the objectives for the first year listed as: establish a website; create a network of regional, national and international contacts; form a steering group; identify potential projects and partnerships; liaise with all relevant agencies, establish a "virtual resource centre"; and generate at least £50,000 to contribute towards maintaining financial viability and to sustain project development.

### **"Surviving and thriving" – the University of Derby**

The iCeGS project had been initiated by the University and its partners. From the beginning of the project the relationship with the University of Derby was crucial, and support at the start of the project was strong, with both the Vice-Chancellor Professor Roger Waterhouse and the Chancellor Sir Christopher Ball backing it.

Despite the strong support from the top, it was not always clear what part of the University CeGS should fit into. This meant that at various times during its history the Centre was a free-floating entity, before being aligned with the Business Development Unit and then moving into the Faculty of Education, Health and Science. Shortly after this iCeGS was merged with another free-standing research unit in the Faculty headed by Dr. Peter Rivers and called the Research Evaluation Services (RES) to become a part of a larger Research & Knowledge Transfer Unit (RKTU). However, RKTU was short lived and iCeGS then moved to be part of the School of Education:

"Career guidance is a difficult thing to pigeon hole. It crosses across a lot

of fields: psychology, counselling, sociology, economics, business, human resources and so on. But I think that it should be rooted in education as, ultimately, it is about helping people to rethink how they see themselves and the world around them and that is essentially an educational task. So I think that we fit best in the School of Education.”

TH

This peripatetic history has been difficult at times for the Centre, but it has survived and even thrived in a variety of different institutional locations:

“iCeGS actually has the longest institutional history of any research and income generation (rather than learning and teaching) unit that’s a kind of self-standing budgetary entity. It has longevity here and a distinctiveness.” PW

### **Appointing the Director of the Centre**

Since Tony Watts was not in a position to manage the Centre on a daily basis, it was decided to recruit a Manager for the Centre (later retitled Director). Interviews for the post took place at the start of 1998. Deirdre Hughes, a Senior Lecturer at Nottingham Trent University, was appointed. Deirdre had started her career in social services in Bristol and then moved to a post that involved approaching employers in the hope of persuading them to take on some of Bristol’s “hardest to help young people” (FE Week, 2013). From Bristol she took a postgraduate diploma in career guidance at the University of the West of England and then, while at Nottingham, completed an Open University Master’s degree in education and employment.

“What I do remember was the interview with Deirdre because she virtually took it over! She was very impressive. And she had a lot of energy and I thought that that was what we needed: somebody who had the creativity to make it work. Another great thing about Deirdre was that she would talk about a problem and then would say, ‘but the good news is’: she was very resilient and always tried to see a positive way through a problem.” TW

The Centre was officially launched in June 1998 and the first CeGS Newsletter was published in September 1998. This announced the steering group, the management group, and the beginnings of the Associate network. It stated:



Dr Deirdre Hughes OBE, first Head of Centre (later Director).



Tony Watts speaking at the iCeGS Annual Lecture in 2008.

“He (Tony Watts) and everyone involved with the Centre have a clear vision of helping the Careers Consortium Ltd and the University of Derby to establish a centre of excellence in guidance studies at a regional, national and international level.

“In order to fulfil this ambition we need your help and support. We want to engage and encourage individuals and organisations to work with us, to maximise the opportunities we have to offer and to help us push forward the boundaries in the development of guidance and lifelong learning.”

### **Setting the agenda for CeGS: Tony Watts’ inaugural lecture**

The Annual Lecture, given by a leading thinker in the field of education and guidance, has become one of the highlights of the iCeGS calendar. The first such lecture (1998) was also Tony Watts’ inaugural lecture as Visiting Professor. He used the occasion to raise some important issues facing the career field and to set the agenda for the new Centre. In 1998 a new Government was in power, the new millennium was only a year away, and the digital revolution was in full swing:

“The question this poses is whether the career guidance profession has a role in this new era, and if so, what that role is. Is it a profession whose time is passing, or a profession whose time has come?”

Watts suggested that the traditional concept of “career” was fragmenting and needed to be redefined. Career is a powerful concept if we believe that everyone has a career and recognise that career is the concept that links life, learning and work:

“‘Lifelong learning’ is now a widely-heard mantra. What the use of the word ‘career’ does is to link lifelong learning to work, to add the element of progression, and to ground both firmly in the individual. But for people to understand the new concept, and to see it as applying to all, requires major changes in their mind-set. Certainly in the UK, many people are locked into the old concept, seeing ‘career’ as describing the past rather than the future, as applying to ‘them’ rather than to ‘us’. Those involved in career guidance need to be at the forefront of efforts to change the mind-set. And that requires, I believe, an active involvement in public policy.”

Watts’ lecture proved to be a powerful statement of the value of lifelong guidance:

“The key issue is how we can reconstruct our career guidance provision



“Careers can no longer be foretold: they are forged through a series of decisions we all make throughout our life-span. Guidance needs to be available at all these decision points.”

TW

so that it is accessible to individuals not just at the start of their working lives but throughout their working and learning lives. Careers can no longer be foretold: they are forged through a series of decisions we all make throughout our life-span. Guidance needs to be available at all these decision points. What is more, it needs to be available to help us to review regularly whether and when we need to make new decisions: to invest in new skills, to scan new possibilities.”

In his inaugural lecture Watts threw down the gauntlet for research, practice and policy in career guidance to renew itself. iCeGS has continued to pursue this renewal throughout its 15-year history.

CAREER TRACK: SUPPORTING GRADUATE  
EMPLOYABILITY?

JULIE BLANT

MAN'N GUIDANCE STUDIES /  
THROUGH WORK

## How does iCeGS “do” research?

“So, the context of the research varies, the purpose varies, the processes vary, but what remains the same is it’s all got something to do with supporting individuals and organisations through transitions. It’s all got something to do with career and it’s all done for a purpose, if you like, it’s all responding to somebody’s express need and wish, and that’s what I like about it – it’s really applied.”

JH

“I think one of the ways to explain it is that we apply research principles and research methods to real-life questions and issues. So the research that we do tends to be project-based and we tend to work in teams when we undertake a project. Those teams can be teams within the Centre but very often we partner up with other research centres either in different universities or in different commercial organisations. We will either be asked to tender to undertake research projects or we will search out tender opportunities, or try and generate research questions that people might be interested to have answered. The types of research that we can do can vary. It can be big national surveys of things, national surveys of schools for example, or it could be more qualitative work where we interview a range of individuals.

“We’ve interviewed vulnerable young people, people who are categorised as ‘NEET’, which is not in education, employment or training. We’ve interviewed young mothers, we’ve interviewed people who are on work-based learning courses. We interview people who are going through training courses, sometimes it’s stakeholder interviews, which are either face-to-face or on the phone. Very often we’ll do a literature search and summary, which is where John [Marriott] comes in, and the outputs that we produce are research reports, which we hope have a good degree of academic research rigour and robustness. We try to present them in ways that are appropriate to the audience and sometimes we’ll write a report that’s got one output for a policy-making audience and another output for the client which has got more detail and more technical detail in there.

“So, the context of the research varies, the purpose varies, the processes vary, but what remains the same is it’s all got something to do with supporting individuals and organisations through transitions. It’s all got something to do with career and it’s all done for a purpose, if you like, it’s all responding to somebody’s express need and wish, and that’s what I like about it – it’s really applied.



Jo Hutchinson interviewing young people for research in 2012. Photographed for the Research Review.

“Some things have changed so, for example, technology changes how we do things quite a lot, how we do lots of online surveys whereas back in the day there was lots of paper involved. We can Skype now, we can have telephone conferences, so we don’t have to travel all the time for client meetings and so forth. So that has changed but, again, the heart of it is finding ways to get data that somehow will answer the difficult questions that you’ve been asked.” JH



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SCHOOL OF SCIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF STRATHCLYDE  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, HEALTH AND SCIENCES  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Shirley D.  
Senior Lecturer  
Research & Development

## The Early Years (1999–2004)

“The way that the Annual Lecture contributed was interesting; Vice-Chancellors didn’t usually chair lectures on career guidance, this one did. So, suddenly there was a big hall and a big reception, and people started coming nationally to Derby to talk careers.”

DP

“I think it (CeGS) helped increase the national reputation of careers education and guidance, and because it came from this region – going back again to that network behind it, that it was the vision of many different people – I think it raised the profile, that’s the contribution that I would see. The way that the Annual Lecture contributed was interesting; Vice-Chancellors didn’t usually chair lectures on career guidance, this one did. So, suddenly there was a big hall and a big reception, and people started coming nationally to Derby to talk careers.” DP

CeGS quickly established a steering group and a management group, although at first the staff at the Centre only comprised Deirdre Hughes, Tony Watts (part-time) and the Centre secretary, Avis Butcher. The first office was based in B Block opposite the University’s careers service although the Centre was not formally linked to the service. In the first year Fiona Dowie was appointed to assist Deirdre Hughes. The following years saw further expansion as more administrative posts were created and the Associate network grew in numbers. Lindsey Bowes joined as a full-time researcher in 2001, and in 2002 took on the management of CeGS’ research and development activities. Also in 2002, Cathy Stead was appointed as Library and Information Co-ordinator. By the start of 2003, Sue Moon, Dr Kappa Artaraz and Satya Sagu had joined the Centre as researchers.

The first year also saw a visit from Professor Jim Sampson from Florida State University. Sampson gave a presentation on adult guidance developments within the USA and shared new models for screening clients, diagnosing their needs, and developing appropriate responses. Jim became a Visiting Professor in Career Development and Management at CeGS and has worked with the Centre for many years, running seminars, workshops, sharing good practice and researching and writing with Centre staff, and enabling CeGS to learn from his FSU experience:

“Jim, at Florida State, had set up a research unit which was co-located

with the university's careers service: it was a bit separate but there were definite links. We thought if we could get that kind of model to work here too, it could be quite exciting." TW

"I can remember listening to Professor Jim Sampson from Florida talking about how to run successful drop-in and open-access careers centres, and what facilities and how people needed to be able to know what was inside before they went inside, and what would attract people in. And I know it sounds trite, but the next time we opened a careers centre I made sure there was a glass wall there and that people could see right inside the centre, could see the interaction that was happening, and traffic increased immediately because people weren't afraid of walking into an administrative office so to speak, they were walking into something that was familiar, like a shop." JP



Professor Jim Sampson has been a friend of iCeGS and, later, Visiting Professor, since 1998.

### **“Entering the brave new world of Connexions” – research and responding to policy**

In the first year the Centre published five papers including Tony Watts' inaugural lecture. A good example of these papers was *Closer Working? A Review of Working Relationships between Career Service Organisations and Higher Education Careers Advisory Services* (Watts, Hughes & Haslam, 1999), jointly funded by the Department for Education and Employment and the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services. This early paper clearly set out the commitment to the provision of integrated lifelong career development that was to be a feature of CeGS' activity for the next 15 years, even though its specific ideas were never strongly followed up:

“We did this report on *Closer Working*, which is about relationships between careers services and higher education services. There's always been a problem about higher education services being a bit outside everything else in this field and that was an attempt to work into that. It was a very interesting report, but in policy terms, in the end, nothing happened. Not because of the quality of the report, which was high, but just simply because it never went anywhere.” TW

A further example, which proved much more influential, was a paper entitled *Who Needs Guidance?* (Sampson, Palmer & Watts, 1999). This explored the relevance of Jim Sampson's differentiated service delivery model to the UK, including lessons from piloting it in Coventry. It provided

a practical but also theoretically grounded basis on which policy-makers and managers could target intensive careers services for adults to those who needed them most, in terms of their readiness for career decision-making.

CeGS was created shortly after the start of the new Labour administration of 1997 and it is no surprise that much of the Centre's work during the next few years was influenced by the policies of this Government. In 1999 the DfEE (Department for Education and Employment) announced that there would be a new Youth Support Service in England by 2001. Details of the new service came from a Social Exclusion Unit report *Bridging the Gap: Learning to Succeed*. The service was named "Connexions" (Peck, 2004):

"So we were about to enter into the brave new world of Connexions. There was a 500 million pound pledge for an army of 20,000 learning mentors, says the Sunday Times dated 30 January 2000, to tackle the problems of disaffection and to raise standards and da-de-da. If we knew then what we know now! But I think that that was a really interesting time because it was just on the cusp of trying to develop the careers service, and then there was this move over, which proved extremely significant and not beneficial, into this widening of the service into the wonderful world of Connexions." **SB**

In June 2000 CeGS hosted a conference in London on "Research to Inform the Development of the New Connexions Service" and published a paper highlighting the event's conclusions and recommendations, one of which was to stress the importance of evidence-based practice (Hughes & Morgan, 2000). However, many felt that the policy environment at the time was relatively hostile to career guidance, which was not good news for the still fledgling Centre:

"CeGS could have gone at that stage because there was such an anti-careers service feeling within government, they really didn't want to know about anything to do with careers work. Slowly that feeling started to turn a little bit, particularly as we stepped up the pace in terms of reducing the number of young people not in employment, education and training. CeGS... was shaping some of its papers and its thinking around that hard-to-help group, and I think that gave it some credibility in the new Connexions era." **JP**

**Who Needs Guidance?** 

**James P. Sampson Jr.**  
Center for the Study of Technology in Counseling and Career Development,  
Florida State University, USA.

**Martin Palmer**  
Quality Careers Services, Coventry

**A.G. Watts**  
Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby, and National Institute for  
Careers Education and Counselling.

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A key issue in guidance provision is how to make services flexible and responsive to client need. A model is presented which distinguishes between individuals with high, medium and low levels of readiness for career decision-making. It is suggested that those with high levels can be referred to self-help services, those with moderate readiness to brief staff-assisted services, and those with low readiness to individual case-managed services. The theoretical basis for the model, the use of diagnostic instruments within the model, its implications for career resource rooms and Internet websites, and its staffing implications, are discussed. Elements of the model are currently being applied in a careers service setting in Coventry. The main principles of this work are described, and the more general relevance to the model to current policy issues in the UK is examined.

The Centre for Guidance Studies was created in 1998 by the University of Derby and five careers service companies (the Careers Consortium (East Midlands) Ltd.). The centre aims to bridge the gap between guidance theory and practice, it supports and connects guidance practitioners, policy-makers and researchers through research activities and learning opportunities, and by providing access to resources related to guidance and lifelong learning.



Sixteen pilot areas were chosen to trial the Connexions service, with the intention that it would be up and running across the country by 2003. In 2002 CeGS published a series of reports evaluating the service in Coventry and Warwickshire (Hughes & Morgan, 2001) and in Lincolnshire (Hughes, Lang & Popham, 2001). While these reports concluded there was enthusiasm for Connexions, there were many operational issues to be addressed. In particular:

“The question still remains as to how the new Connexions service will reconcile the provision of a universal service for all young people alongside a targeted service aimed at those young people who are hardest-to-help” (Hughes & Morgan, 2001).

This conclusion refers to the Labour government’s concerns over social exclusion, which meant that particular attention was addressed to young people who had dropped out of the formal education, training and employment system: the so-called “NEET” group (not in education, employment or training). A flawed design (Watts, 2001) meant that Connexions did not satisfactorily provide both a universal service and a targeted service for the NEET group, and this remained the case throughout its existence.

Also in 2002, the Guidance Accreditation Board commissioned and sponsored a research report that provided a detailed analysis of a potential framework designed to assess, evaluate and measure the benefits of career guidance. The Centre, along with Professor David Mayston of York University, piloted the framework in Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire and Rutland. Preliminary work demonstrated that there was potential to develop new and innovative ways of capturing “quality of life” issues and relating these to “opportunity and progression”. The key challenge was how best to assess and measure the impact of career guidance within an evidence-based framework:

“NICEE had started this, actually, we did a project with the Policy Studies Institute (PSI). There was a clear message from the civil servants that if you can demonstrate economic benefits, that’s going to have some leverage with ministers. So we thought - this was NICEE now - we thought we would do a piece of work with an external body which would give it credibility. PSI was the body and they were very well-known and respected. There was a book by Michael White and John Killeen and



Simon Bysshe has been an Associate of iCeGS since 1999 and has worked on many projects with iCeGS.

myself called *The Economic Value of Career Guidance*, and then Deirdre was keen that CeGS should do something on this as well and she got David Mayston to do a report, and then did a report with others, on the Economic Benefits of Guidance.”<sup>2</sup> TW

“*Economic Benefits of Guidance*, I think that was a significant piece of work because it was one of the early bits of work on this whole question of the ‘so what’ question. The Treasury question has always dogged this field, you know, yes, we think this is jolly nice that people have this help but does it make a difference? Because Treasury wants simple equations of: we put this in by way of x quid goes in, bang for your buck, what actually comes out the other end? What impact does this have, and how do we measure impact, and what do we know this does do and what, with further research, could we prove it could do better? And DfES were asking some early questions a decade ago around this, they still continue to ask these questions. The sadness is they haven’t quite worked out that actually, if you want answers to the questions that you’re asking, you need to set up longer-term studies.

“This was some of the early work that was done on that and there’s been a sort of continuing work been down the years. That’s a piece of work that I still refer to and I think it’s important to say, when politicians do say, as they quite often do, well why should we give the money to you rather than somebody else, to be able to say, actually, yes, there’s a fair amount of work that’s been done on this. And we can demonstrate that there are economic and there are also broader social benefits of this work, and before you cut it just have a think about that.” SB

### **“Genuinely interested in making a difference” – the Associate network**

To help carry out its research, CeGS created an Associate network. Deirdre worked closely with a key iCeGS associate, Dr Sandra Morgan, to design and develop the Associates structure. The network continues to this day and the idea is that fellow professionals from the careers field form a reference group that also undertakes work for the Centre as and when necessary. Many people from a wide range of backgrounds have

<sup>2</sup>The three reports were by White, Killeen & Watts (1992), Mayston (2002) and Hughes, Bosley, Bowes & Bysshe (2002) respectively.

been members of the network: the number of Associates currently stands at 42 plus the two Visiting Professors. The model appealed to many of those invited to take part:

“What I wanted to be able to do was work on projects that were genuinely about taking the field forward, hopefully that broke some new ground, that encouraged innovation, that stimulated things and actually made me a bob or two as well. From some early meetings it became clear that Deirdre was gathering around her colleagues who were genuinely interested in making a difference. I remember at a very early stage we developed a concept of the kind of figure-of-eight loop. The figure-of-eight loop was around policy and practice. What we wanted to do was to work with policy makers on developing policy to influence practice and then to take the world of practice back up to influence policy. It was a very simple but a very elegant way, we thought at the time, of actually summarising what it is we wanted to do; we wanted to be equally comfortable in both parts of the eight, if you like. And I think it was that, and getting a real sense of that at an early stage, which said yes, this is a place where I can feel very comfortable and somewhere I feel I can make a contribution.” **SB**

“I’ve always been impressed by the Associate network as a model. You know, how can you have the capacity to bid for substantial projects if you’ve only got a team of three or four core people and those same people are doing some teaching and some research and they’re writing all the bits, never mind actually delivering on them? So you have this wider team of Associates that you call on as and when you need to when you’ve won the work.” **CW**

“I remember being very impressed with the first Associate meeting that I went to. It was very well organised, there was an international speaker, there was a number of Associates there, and it appeared to be pretty vibrant, lots of people involved, lots of activity going on. And good links particularly with Connexions and career services for young people.” **JH**

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**JH**



A meeting of the Associate network in 2013.

# The joy of research

“I like problem solving and I think research allows me to be nosey and ask questions, and dig and analyse problems, and look at solutions and apply a bit of creative thinking to how one develops those problems. So it’s a bit like being an explorer in a way.”

MS

It might surprise those who look in from the outside that one of the most enjoyable parts of research in the field of career is interacting with people. As these quotes demonstrate, the subject comes down to people in the end:

“My role working within the centre gives a unique and privileged access to individuals. I think that’s the most interesting and rewarding element to the job. Because you’re undertaking this project, because you are who you are, you can ask particular questions, you can go into individuals’ work organisations or places that they’re familiar with, whether that’s the GP surgery or the local library, or wherever it is, and you can meet a real diverse range of individuals and speak to a very diverse range of professionals, and you get a really good insight into the kinds of issues, questions, concerns and realities that people experience, and that’s the fascination of the role. I really like that, the fieldwork element to it, because that’s the stuff that keeps it fresh and real and interesting.” JH

“I like problem solving and I think research allows me to be nosey and ask questions, and dig and analyse problems, and look at solutions and apply a bit of creative thinking to how one develops those problems. So it’s a bit like being an explorer in a way.

“Yeah, I find it really interesting, very interesting, in fact it’s fascinating. I mean, there is nothing more interesting than talking to people about their lives and worlds, which is what we do when we talk to them about what they do, or what they think, and people love talking about those sort of things and it’s absolutely fascinating.” MS



The photograph was taken during fieldwork in a Welsh primary school. The research was investigating children and young people's perceptions of the world of work and the role which gender plays in developing these views. The puppets were used as a means of engaging very small children, ages 5-7, in discussions about work. The puppets (one a boy, Sion, and one a girl, Sian) told the children that they wanted to perform non-gender-stereotypical roles when they grew up. The children asked the puppets questions about these ideas. We then had a conversation with the children about their thoughts regarding the puppets' aspirations. The results revealed that even at a young age children are beginning to develop views about work and the role that gender might play in life and work roles. Even at age 7, some children were beginning to associate their interests in school with possible career options. When asked to draw a picture of what he wanted to be when he grew up one boy, age 7, told us he wanted to be a marine biologist. When asked why, he told us: "In class we are learning about the blue whale and they live in the sea and I think I would like to find out more about the blue whale".



Julie Blant and Deirdre Hughes at Julie's graduation.

### **“It was her enthusiasm that enthused me” – setting up an MA**

By early 1999 the possibility of a Master's programme in guidance was being discussed with the University's School of Education, and by the end of September 2000 the first intake of students started at Derby.

In 2004 Julie Blant became the first person to graduate from the course. At the time of writing Julie is working as Post-Graduate Careers Service Manager in the Nottingham University Business School. Julie is also an iCeGS Associate:

“I would say that if it wasn't for the Master's I probably wouldn't have had the confidence to come to a university like Nottingham as early as I did in my career, and to be in the role that I'm in now, because the Master's helped me to examine the political scene of what was going on in career guidance. It helped me to think about theoretical frameworks in a lot more detail and it helped me to locate some of my practice as well in that theory. There's lots of debate about what's career guidance, career coaching, how do they relate, counselling, all of those client support professions and how they all interrelate or not, as the case may be. I felt that it gave me the language to explain what I actually do.

“Deirdre was my personal tutor and my supervisor, and I think the influence that she had on me in that time was great, actually. I have to say she inspired me and I was enthused by her enthusiasm for career guidance as a profession, and I think she wanted to fly the flag for career guidance as a profession as indeed, of course, the Centre does, and everybody involved, but I think it was her enthusiasm that enthused me.”

JB

### **Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

CeGS established annual programmes of seminars, workshops, symposia and lectures, which culminate each year with the Annual Lecture. Speakers at the Annual Lecture have come from both the UK and abroad.<sup>3</sup>

David Peck highlights two early Annual Lectures. In 1999 Valerie Bayliss,

<sup>3</sup> All of the annual lectures are available on the iCeGS website.

“The last decade will not be remembered as some kind of high water mark in the development of guidance services but as a major stepping stone in the long developing recognition that access to high-quality guidance for everyone is part of a civilised society and a recognition that government and people have the kind of grip they need on meeting the challenges of the economy and society.”

Bayliss (2000)

a former senior civil servant and Professor Associate in the Department of Education Studies, University of Sheffield, talked on “Joined-Up Guidance: Where Do We Go From Here?” (Bayliss, 2000) in which she outlined an agenda for the guidance community over the whole field of lifelong learning for young people and adults. She expressed the hope that:

“The last decade will not be remembered as some kind of high water mark in the development of guidance services but as a major stepping stone in the long developing recognition that access to high-quality guidance for everyone is part of a civilised society and a recognition that government and people have the kind of grip they need on meeting the challenges of the economy and society.”

Then in 2001 the Connexions service was addressed by the then head of Connexions, Anne Weinstock, who gave a lecture on the future of the service the title of which, “Connexions and Youth Policy: A Brighter Future?” (Weinstock, 2001), according to Peck, “exemplified confusion” (Peck, 2004).

The Centre also hosted meetings of the East Midlands Guidance Research Network, which started in November 1998. The research network aimed to share research and develop researcher practitioners and to make research accessible to all careers practitioners. In 2003 the Network was renamed the Central Guidance Research Network.

Throughout this period the Centre produced a Newsletter that gave an update on the CeGS team, updates on access to information on guidance, research and development activities, and CeGS events. Work on youth policy, adult guidance and workforce development was highlighted and, from 2003 onwards, a section on international news was added to reflect the increasingly wide scope of CeGS’ interests. In 2001 Tony Watts was recruited by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) for a year and in 2004 both Deirdre Hughes and CeGS associate Sue Gray travelled to the USA to identify leading-edge policies and practices:

“You think, hang on a tick, this is an East Midlands based centre and you’ve got dear old Jim Sampson there, chatting away to Tony and Freda Tallantyre, who was a Pro-VC at the University at that stage, and you begin to see this actually is really quite left field because it isn’t just about



“You think, hang on a tick, this is an East Midlands based centre and you’ve got dear old Jim Sampson there, chatting away to Tony and Freda Tallantyre, who was a Pro-VC at the University at that stage, and you begin to see this actually is really quite left field because it isn’t just about local developments. You’re beginning, at a very early stage, to be getting the notion of yes, actually, we’re interested in scholarship, we’re interested in research, we’re interested in developing and forging links with international best practice, and so on.

At the same time we’re also looking at – I have to say – some fairly low-level stuff, you know, transitions projects in Leicestershire, but at that stage already some quite significant ranging out to wider practice.”

SB

# “Careers Services: History, Policy and Practice in the United Kingdom”

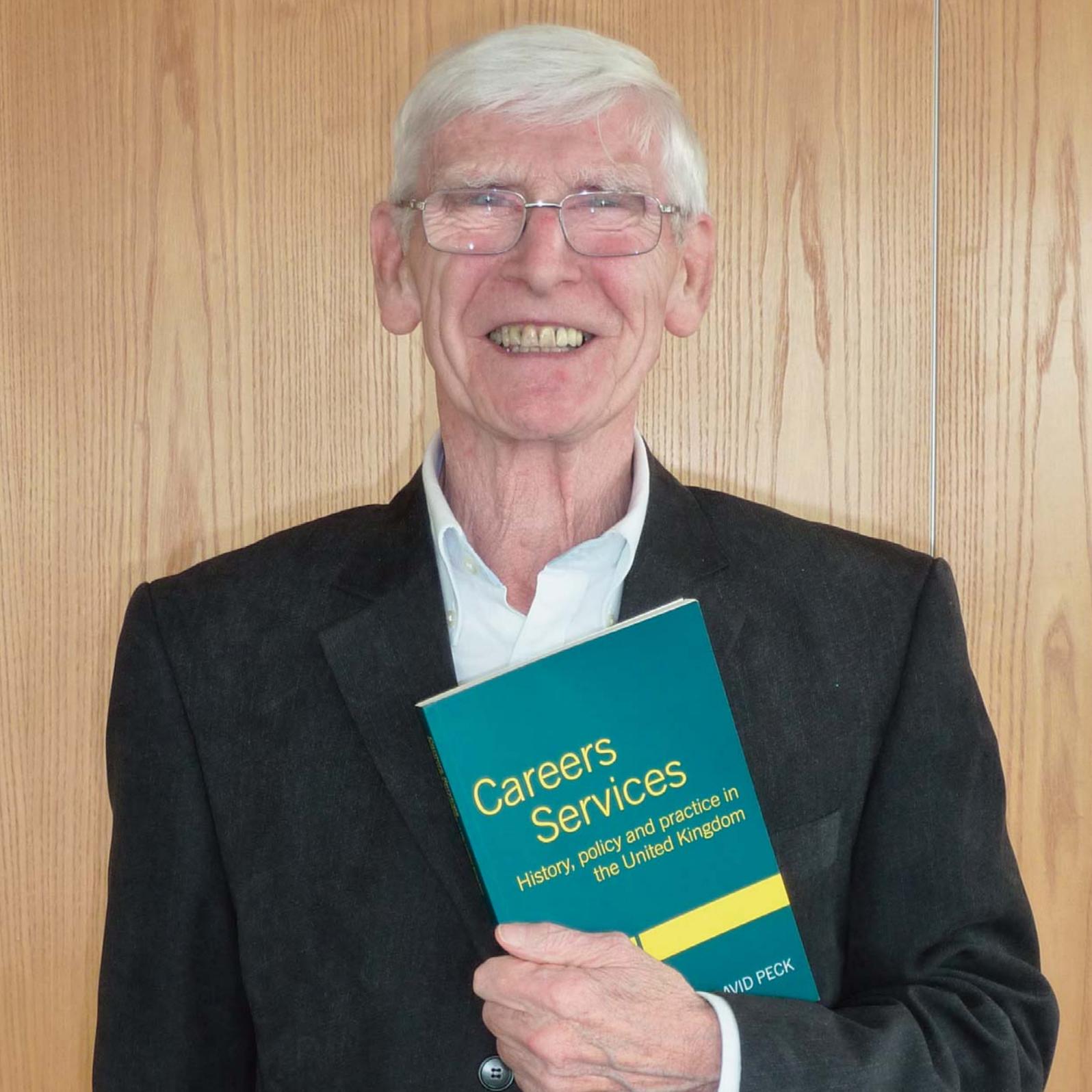
“The decision point was when I met with Deirdre Hughes and later with Tony Watts, who had pointed out the gap in the literature and promised practical and moral support. Without that support the work would not have been completed.”

DP

On 16th June CeGS, in co-operation with the Institute of Career Guidance (ICG), launched its first book. “Careers Services: History, Policy and Practice in the United Kingdom” was the product of four years’ research and preparation by David Peck, CeGS Associate. Representatives from the UK and overseas attended an official launch, held at the University of Derby.

What emerged from David Peck’s summary of the contents was not simply a fascinating account of the development of this important sector of social policy from the beginning of the 20th century, but also the relevance of the lessons learned from a century of experience to the problems faced today. The partnership between teachers providing careers education and career advisers providing impartial career advice was a case in point:

“I was encouraged by colleagues at the University of Birmingham in the 1980s when careers services were, as they often had been before, a subject of strong political interest. A number of friends who were familiar with my articles in the educational press had also invited me to record the history of career education and guidance. The decision point was when I met with Deirdre Hughes and later with Tony Watts, who had pointed out the gap in the literature and promised practical and moral support. Without that support the work would not have been completed.” DP (CeGS Newsletter, 2004)



# Careers Services

History, policy and practice in the United Kingdom

DAVID PECK

What has all this meant?  
Career qualifications?

### Career industry: impact on practice

- Shrinking resource base
- Target culture
- Competition or collaboration?
- Scrutiny and accountability
- Shifting policy priorities
- Clients or customers?

like open  
pub. org

### Occupational identity

- Multiple identities
  - Formed within communities of practice
  - Occupational identity is one of the most important
- social + individual  
— self-reflective experience of this  
— at heart  
— relationship

### Occupational identity

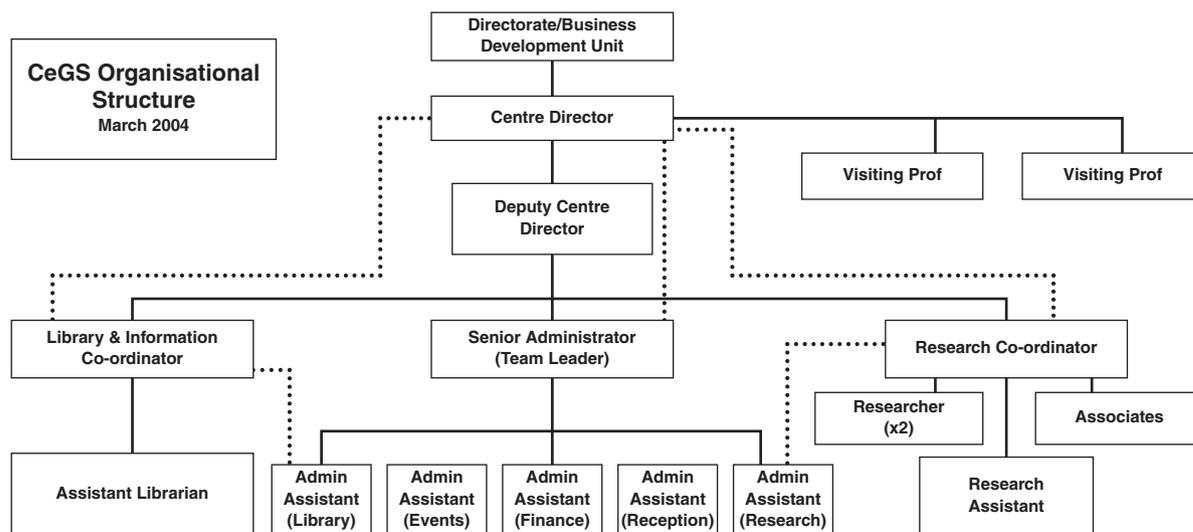
- Process of becoming skilled and remaining skilled as part of developing an occupational identity is complex
- Training has a dominant effect

### Training context

- OECD
- qualifications and training structure is very diverse and highly developed compared with many other countries (p. 24)
  - more coherent structure is needed (p. 28) to provide clear paths

## An Established Centre (2005–2007)

By 2005 CeGS had expanded from its three staff at the beginning to an organisation that employed more than a dozen people and had access to a wide range of talents via the Associate network. This period also saw



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2004

Jenny Bimrose appointed as a Visiting Professor and authoring a number of important papers with Deirdre and other members of the CeGS team (e.g. Hughes, Bimrose *et al.*, 2005 and Bimrose & Hughes, 2006) as well as giving an inaugural lecture on the changing context of career practice (Bimrose, 2006).

A reorganisation of staff in 2004 involved “the creation of a number of new roles, the replacement of some existing roles and a refocusing of others” (see above). CeGS also gained attractive new accommodation on the fourth floor of the University’s South Tower that provided a new office and meeting room, a new store-room, and a dedicated location for the National Library Resource for Guidance (NLRG).

“So iCeGS only came into the University formally in around 2005 where it came in as part of the Business Development Unit, Andrew Hartley managed it at that time. It’s a bit like careers work is iCeGS, in that it fits everywhere and it fits nowhere.”

SN

By this point the Centre had established itself within the field and was receiving considerable numbers of enquiries for research, training and consultancy. The Centre organised many events and courses and consequently started to increase its administrative staffing. At first, this meant that the office became very busy, with lots of people organising these activities (more recently, much of this work has been taken on by administrative staff in the School of Education). When Siobhan Neary started work at the Centre in 2004, she remembers being impressed by the level of bustle and activity in the office:

“When I started I think we had about 13 people in the office at the time. Deirdre [Hughes] had her office, you’d have two administrators there, we had two part-time receptionists. We had two full-time library staff and we had one of the administrators who worked part-time in the library as well, so we had two and a half library staff. Then we had a senior researcher and one or two research assistants. So we had a lot of staff.” SN

One important feature of the Connexions service was that existing local careers services either came to an end or were re-branded as Connexions services. This had the effect of lessening the influence of the East Midlands Consortium:

“I think Connexions destroyed a lot of that relationship. So it drifted away and then the Consortium largely drifted away. I’m the only one who’s still here who had that relationship. What was left was the Connexions relationship, which was more tenuous. I proudly say in Nottinghamshire Connexions was a re-badged careers service with bells on, because that’s what we wanted and that’s what we designed and that’s what worked.” JP

As well as external changes there were also some important internal changes as iCeGS was moved into a new position within the University structures:

“So iCeGS only came into the University formally in around 2005 where it came in as part of the Business Development Unit, Andrew Hartley managed it at that time. It’s a bit like careers work is iCeGS, in that it fits everywhere and it fits nowhere. So we’ve had quite a lot of debate over the years as to where it is best located. Most of my recollection is over in the South Tower and the fourth floor, and at that time Deirdre reported directly to one of the Pro-Vice-Chancellors, to Freda Tallantyre. The



The CeGS team and key supporters in 2005. From left to right, Siobhan Neary, Hugh Hastie (Chief Executive, Connexions Derbyshire Ltd), Deirdre Hughes, Professor Tony Watts, Jo Hutchinson, Steve Stewart (Chief Executive, Coventry and Warwickshire Connexions) and John Coyne.

University was a very different place in those days, pre-John Coyne [current Vice-Chancellor] as well, iCeGS was this little research centre, did its own thing, nobody really asked too many questions about it I don't think, really." SN

“In a sense a lot of CeGS’ work was on a commercial basis. I think the University leadership at the time thought that the best place for CeGS to be managed was within the framework of the Business Development Unit, not within a Faculty. So at that point Deirdre Hughes, who was director at the time, kind of came within the structure of the Business Development Unit and the head of the Business Development Unit became her line manager and so on.” PW

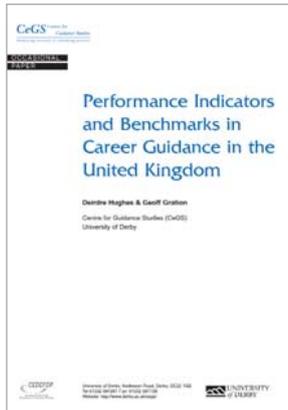
### **A changing scene for policy and research**

Throughout this period, research papers addressed issues in both youth and adult career guidance, the benefits of guidance, and the future shape of guidance itself. By 2004/5 there were rumours in the press that the Connexions service might be reorganised. Deirdre Hughes (2005) provided an overview of how Connexions might develop in future. The conclusion of her report made a strong case for the need for research to inform policy:

“The research that charts the life of Connexions is of critical importance, because this provides us with a reminder of the shortcomings in the original Connexions strategy, and it also raises awareness of how the Connexions partnerships responded positively to their set targets. Connexions had to deliver within a complex and confused strategic context. Learning from this recent past should enable policy-makers to concentrate their minds on the new strategy required to achieve a universal service, with targeted provision for those young people who require more intensive support” (Hughes, 2005).

In 2006 another paper covering what Simon Bysse referred to earlier as the “so what?” question was published (Hughes & Gration, 2006):

“This one I think was a very good paper, the one which Deirdre and Geoff Gration did on Performance Indicators and Benchmarks, which linked with the earlier papers on the economic value of career guidance. These reports, I think, were quite influential. Performance Indicators was a very concrete piece of work looking at the ways in which services should develop appropriate performance indicators and what was being done across the UK in that respect.” TW



“One of the things that we did really well, and our real selling point, was that because we worked so widely with practitioners we could give policy-makers: this is what it’s really like at the grass-roots level, these are the issues, this is what’s happening; never mind what you think’s happening, this is the reality. Because of the training we did with practitioners and because of the Master’s degree we got a huge amount of intelligence.”

SN

In the same year, Steve Higginbotham and Deirdre Hughes (2006) wrote a paper entitled *The Future of Professional Career Guidance: Where Next?* They contended that:

“As a profession we need to seize the initiative and address the social and economic needs of the new century. As we have argued, the main reason we have lost impetus is that we have failed to be innovative and fresh in our approach. The profession needs to agree a common framework (a blueprint) that galvanises our collective efforts to deliver high-quality services for the benefit of potential consumers, focused on the concept of ‘career’ and ‘career development’. We need to design, develop and deliver training and professional development programmes to support the role of the new professional career development worker. Crucially, we also need to join-up our relatively small-sized professional associations to present a more concentrated and coherent message to policy-makers and employers.”

Many of these ideas proved to be prescient, with iCeGS later involved in the development of “blueprints” for England and Scotland and the Centre developing more CPD activity and supporting initiatives to unite the existing professional associations.

The Centre has played a key role connecting policy, practice and research. Siobhan Neary argues that it was this ability to have a foot in all of these camps that made the Centre distinctive:

“One of the things that we did really well, and our real selling point, was that because we worked so widely with practitioners we could give policy-makers: this is what it’s really like at the grass-roots level, these are the issues, this is what’s happening; never mind what you think’s happening, this is the reality. Because of the training we did with practitioners and because of the Master’s degree we got a huge amount of intelligence.” SN

# The Impact of iCeGS



“I see iCeGS as my ‘go to’ organisation for career and progression research and development. There is a strong overlap with the thinking of The Progression Trust and I have appreciated the partnership in advocacy for progression. I see iCeGS as a sector champion for progression with strong research expertise and credentials to back it up.”

Philip Dent, The Progression Trust

“I think we can make quite a big difference actually. I think we can make a big difference to the organisations who we work with directly, both in terms of skilling up their workforce, informing their thinking, informing their practice, so that can have a big impact on the organisations that we work for who commission us. But I think we also can have a big impact in the policy arena. When we produce research which is policy-relevant, robust and well-disseminated, we can really help to shape the thinking of policy-makers at maybe local, maybe regional, maybe national (level). In ways that help them to think about career and career support, in a way that moves them beyond the oft-quoted, ‘Well I never got any careers advice and it hasn’t done me any harm’, that type of thing. So we really can help inform the way that people think about how others develop their career thinking ideas and their career management skills. A lot of careers-type support would always go into vulnerable groups, adult learners with low literacy skills for example, but very little career support goes into helping women returners, professionals, older workers who need to reskill, rethink their objectives, and I think as a Centre we can help focus attention on those areas that aren’t currently the attention of policy but are still nevertheless really important and can make a real difference to individuals’ lives and social justice and economic progress and those big things.” JH

“For me it’s a way of keeping abreast of what’s going on in the profession more generally. What iCeGS allows me to do is think about things from many different perspectives, because of the Associate network and the work that you hear about, and it helps you to realise that there’s other

careers guidance worlds out there, and helps us keep our feet on the ground a little bit. The papers that come out, Tristram's blog, that sort of thought-provoking stuff is there in the background. It's not something that I necessarily access every day but I think that having people like Tony Watts involved in the Associate network and in iCeGS, and having the updates from him of what's going on in the policy arena, is just marvellous because you couldn't get those easily from anywhere else." **JB**

"It's developed into an important beacon for the whole guidance business. I think one of its distinguishing features is its being seen very much to be about the field and for the field. Things that have traditions have developed, like the annual lecture which attracts a good range of practitioners. I think it's important because it's there, it's important because it's doing research, it's a centre of information, it's – to an extent, possibly – seen as an irritant to government because it has an essential role, I think, to challenge and to inform and to seek to influence.

"Clearly, it's a research body and it has to put out well-evidenced research that will stand proper scrutiny, peer scrutiny and also scrutiny from politicians and policy-makers and others." **SB**

## Driving Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in the field

In 2004 CeGS was supported by the University to develop an e-learning version of the Master's in Guidance Studies. Siobhan Neary and Margaret Christopoulos were recruited to develop the Master's and grow the broader CPD offer:

“Ours was very different because ours was about building on what you'd done, so it's very much located in developing the researcher-practitioner, having a strong understanding of the policy agenda, because obviously it intersected the three key bits of iCeGS, which is research, policy and practice, that's what it was about.”

SN

“I wanted something that was CPD because (Nottingham) Trent run the QCG (Qualification in Career Guidance), so they run the initial training programme: these are the skills that you need to have to be a careers practitioner and this is the knowledge that you have.

“I didn't want to go into competition with Trent, I didn't want to replicate that because I didn't see any point. I wanted something that built on that, that nobody else had. So, all the Master's at the time were: you could do a top-up year to the QCG, so you've done your postgraduate diploma, you can do another year, do your independent study and get a Master's.

“Ours was very different because ours was about building on what you'd done, so it's very much located in developing the researcher-practitioner, having a strong understanding of the policy agenda, because obviously it intersected the three key bits of iCeGS, which is research, policy and practice, that's what it was about.

“Initially, the market was very much people who didn't have a qualification in careers guidance, who'd done the NVQ Level 4, they'd done no theory, so they'd done 'this is how you interview' but they hadn't done any of the underpinning knowledge and we gave them that.

“So we filled the gap in that they knew what to do but they didn't know why they were doing it, and we gave them the why they were doing it bit.

“The first cohort we had for the MA when it went online: we had a learning adviser from Wales who worked for the armed forces in the RAF; we had an ex-student who'd actually worked in the careers centre and was doing a community project; there were some advice and guidance people involved; I had one student from Malta, one student from where else?

“We had six to start with and I think four out of them actually finished and got their MAs. So it was quite good and it grew.

“Although there's debate about what the figures actually looked like, we could have between 60 and 70 people on programme, and we would



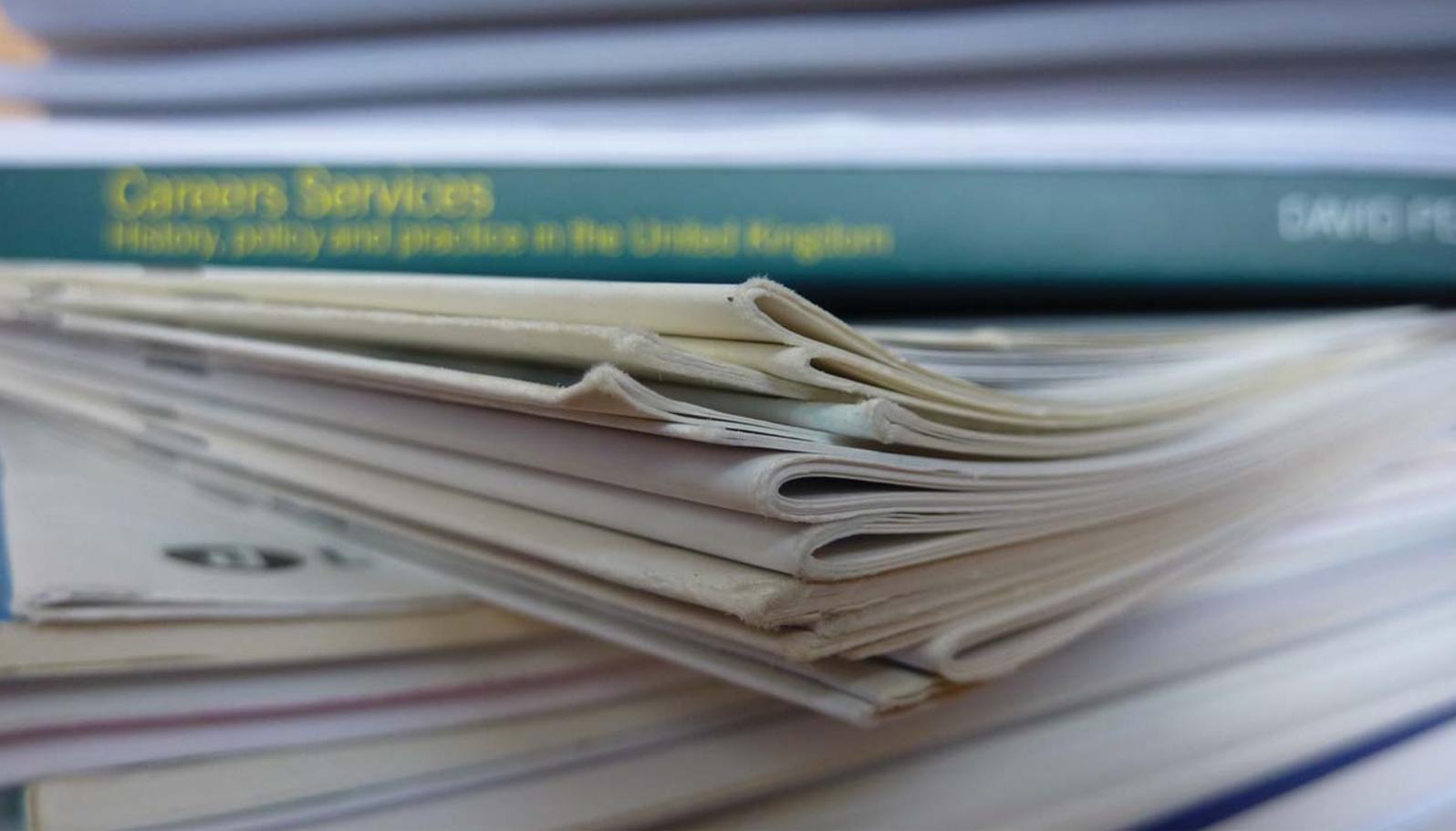
Members of the CeGS team in 2005. From left to right: Lindsey Bowes (Senior researcher), Hailey Lamb (Research assistant), John Marriott, (NLRG coordinator/ CeGS Librarian), Noel Jackson (Senior researcher), Margaret Christopoulos (CPD coordinator) and Jennifer Dean (administrator).

normally get between ten and 15 new students a year with two intakes, and it was all online so we ran both modules simultaneously so people could do them.

“It was very flexible and students really liked it so it worked very well. Whereas the market in the MA I think is very different now, I think it looks different.” SN

The programme quickly became international and attracted students from across the globe. The Centre built a strong relationship with Malta and this resulted in cohorts of Maltese guidance teachers being funded to take the Master’s.

The course was well received and ran until the end of 2012 when changing University priorities closed the programme.



It is due to be replaced in 2014 with a new Master's degree, the MA Education: Career Learning.

The Centre also developed a number of work-based learning programmes for a variety of organisations. In particular, it developed a strong relationship with the University for Industry (UFI) to develop and deliver the first-ever Postgraduate Certificate in Telephone Guidance.

Siobhan Neary says: "CPD has continued to be a major strength in the iCeGS brand as it maintains the original goal of connecting practitioners with policy and research."



UNIVERSITY  
of DERBY

International Centre for  
Guidance Studies (iCeGS)

iCeGS: connecting policy, research



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# Celebrations, Change and Goodbyes (2008–2010)

“If we closed our eyes and imagined UK career guidance in the year 2012, what would it look like?”

DH

## “Big ideas” – the 10th anniversary

“If we closed our eyes and imagined UK career guidance in the year 2012, what would it look like?” (Deirdre Hughes, CeGS Newsletter, Issue 8, February 2003)

The iCeGS 10th Anniversary celebration event was held in Buxton, Derbyshire, on 21 April 2010. The event celebrated the Centre but also looked forward, seeking to develop careers provision and set the agenda for the sector. In her introduction Deirdre Hughes was able to say that iCeGS had written over 500 published and unpublished works, prepared international reports, given evidence to House of Commons committees, hosted more than 50 consultation events and established an information service and strategic partnerships. The iCeGS team was able to highlight new possibilities, projects and partnerships to strengthen the profile and evidence base for high-quality careers work for the future.

Several speakers made predictions for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) moving forward in the 21st century. Notable contributions came from the University’s Vice Chancellor John Coyne, Alan Tuckett (Director, National Institute for Adult Continuing Education), Judy Mallaber MP, Dr Raimo Vuorinen (University of Jyväskylä, Finland), Kieran Gordon (Connexions Greater Merseyside) and Richard Longson (President, Institute of Career Guidance).

Delegates were asked to offer their “big ideas” for improving the guidance world. Several people liked the idea of “Harnessing games technology to provide simulated work experience environment. Not just for 14-19’s but for adults who have less access, resource and time for this sort of learning experience.” Others mentioned the need to embrace social media, to engage better with teachers and employers, and for iCeGS to “develop very clear and compelling evidence of the impact of careers guidance”. iCeGS Associate and later staff member Nicki Moore remembers her involvement in the 10th anniversary fondly:

“But at the ten-year point I asked myself if that was everything I wanted to be remembered for.”

DH

“The 10th anniversary party for CeGS was announced around this time. Not only did this signify something important for the sector as a whole, it also represented an amazing personal journey which had largely been supported by CeGS, albeit unwittingly. I was very proud to brandish the golden party invitations at the Annual Lecture that year and it was the first time I actually felt myself slipping across the fence and feeling more inclined to see my future with the Centre.” NM

However, iCeGS was also about to experience a major change as the Head of Centre started to question her role in the Centre’s future:

“But at the ten-year point I asked myself if that was everything I wanted to be remembered for.” Deirdre Hughes (FE Week, 2013).

Deirdre Hughes left iCeGS in 2008 to set up DMH Associates, and has gone on to become a prominent and influential figure in career guidance. Alongside her research and consultancy work she has also played an increasingly important policy role, first as the President of the Institute for Career Guidance, then as a Commissioner in the UK Commission for Employment and Skills and subsequently as Chair of the National Careers Council. In 2012 she was awarded an OBE for services to careers.

“Deirdre is a ‘driver’, she made things happen. She was never going to be satisfied to be a little section within Derby University. She wouldn’t have been satisfied in simply training careers advisers, she was interested in the national picture and getting a higher profile for the subject and the profession of career guidance. The quality and frequency of the publications, the way debate went on, the way we were able to get high-profile national figures, she was able to get people to do that. The combination of Tony and Deirdre – both very different probably – really became very strong and they were able to move things on: it was a fine combination, I thought.” DP

### **Adding the “i”**

Sharp-eyed readers may have noticed that the Centre for Guidance Studies (CeGS) changed its name to the International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS). The “i” was added at the time of the 10th anniversary and was a reflection of the increasing international profile of the Centre and its work:

“That was a tricky period because we’d just had the ‘i’ brand thing and I



think people were still trying to work out exactly how that might be taken forward. There was a basis for it in fact, which was to do with a number of international projects, and the fact that the guidance field in the UK is often looked to from other parts of the world, particularly emerging former communist countries, for example, were looking for expertise, but at the same time it was also aspiration as well as description.” **PW**

A distinctive feature of the Centre’s work from an early stage was that it covered the whole of the UK, including Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as England. However, the broader aspiration was quickly to become a reality as iCeGS steadily stepped up its involvement in wider international work, building on the international activities and extensive international networks of its two Visiting Professors:

“The tenth anniversary party came and went and the Centre was given a new title. We (I was starting to see myself in the mix) were now International. I can’t pretend to have really understood at the time what being international really meant for the Centre other than there were Visiting Professors and speakers from outside the UK. I had not fully understood the drive for international recognition which was to take the Centre forward into the next phase of its life.

“I couldn’t have dreamed all those years ago as a student of career guidance that I would be working in countries across Europe with interesting partners on amazing projects. iCeGS really is a hub of international expertise and during my time I have met and worked with visiting specialists such as Professor Jim Sampson from Florida State University with whom I co-delivered a workshop along with colleagues from Romania, Italy, the Netherlands, Finland, and Croatia. There are many other projects in the pipeline.” **NM**

The Centre’s engagement with international issues was highlighted in the 2008 Annual Lecture by Ronald Sultana, Professor of Educational Sociology and Comparative Education, University of Malta. In *Career Guidance Policies: Global Dynamics, Local Resonances* (Sultana, 2009), Professor Sultana noted that recent comparative studies by groups such as the OECD and European Commission had covered 55 countries. While this had opened up opportunities for policy lending and policy borrowing he stressed that “trans-national, globalised agendas are reconfigured and reinterpreted at the local level”. The paper concluded by



Tristram Hooley (second left) visited Canada for discussions with career guidance professionals in 2011.

reflecting on “the ethical and epistemological responsibilities that need to be confronted by ‘boundary persons’ who mediate between the global and the local”:

“Career guidance is intensely political, perhaps even more in form than it is in substance, and we need to keep that firmly in mind not only as we travel with policies and ideas from country to country, but also as we encounter diversity at home, for there is nothing that can make us more blind to difference than that difference that clothes itself in familiarity.” (Sultana, 2009).

### **“Refocusing, reconsidering, reprioritising”**

With the departure of Deirdre Hughes, the future of the Centre was uncertain. As an interim measure, the Centre’s Deputy Directors Jo Hutchinson and Siobhan Neary assumed the management of the Centre under the direction of Professor Paul Weller, who was Head of Research and Commercial Development in the Faculty of Education, Health and Sciences.

“What happened was that, we had our 10th Anniversary celebration which coincided with Lindsey [Bowes] leaving, and then Deirdre leaving. After they’d both gone we had a period of refocusing, reconsidering, reprioritising, and myself and Siobhan took over joint leadership as a sort of interim thing, which ended up being well over a year. We enjoyed the support of Professor Paul Weller, who at that time was our line manager and mentor, and he was absolutely excellent, a real strong supporter for the Centre and for the work that we did. We continued to network, to write proposals to win contracts, to deliver research and training. That continued as it always had done.” JH

“There was uncertainty at that time and the question about carrying on the trajectory of, in a sense, embedding this unit not just in the Faculty but then in an academic School, which is seen as being the basic academic building blocks by the current VC, that came up and of course caused a lot of questions for staff. What would it mean absorbing this rather different animal into teacher education etc.? So I had the role, from a Faculty remit, of overseeing that transition, working with the deputy directors who are still in post now, Jo Hutchinson and Siobhan Neary.”

PW

“Our vision was that we wanted the Centre to work more in partnership with organisations, we wanted to get on to lots of national frameworks and we wanted to have a more inclusive approach with the team; we wanted the team to take responsibility for what they did, and to feel that they contributed to the Centre. Jo’s very good on the finance side, I don’t have a finance head at all, so I do the people side, she does the finance side, so between us I think we managed it quite well. That’s when we started really shedding CPD stuff and just doing the things that we thought we needed to do, so, as I said, focussing on frameworks and focussing on partnership building, and that got us through that stage to the next stage of where we’ve been since.” SN

### “Baptism of fire” – a new team

By the middle of 2009 the University had decided to continue to invest in iCeGS and to appoint a new Head of Centre and support the replacement of staff who had left. At this time iCeGS was made up of Jo and Siobhan, Margaret Christopoulos (who worked on the MA), researcher Kieran Bentley, John Marriott, Library and Information Coordinator, and administrator Jennifer Dean. This group was joined by iCeGS Associate Nicki Moore, who was appointed as a member of staff in summer 2009 in the role of Senior Researcher:

“The first day of my new job was glorious and sunny but I was terrified. It is one thing floating in and out of iCeGS as an Associate and a completely different thing taking up permanent residence! At the time I joined the team, Deirdre Hughes had just left and everyone was settling into new responsibilities. For the first 6 months I remained vigilant and completely terrified that someone would phone up and ask me something very searching and requiring endless expertise based on the evidence base and current research all neatly referenced... my learning curve was a very steep one! Just when the stress had begun to reduce (I had been with the Centre for about 4 months) Tristram arrived as the new Head of Centre.”

NM

Tristram Hooley was appointed as the new Head of Centre. He moved from CRAC, the organisation co-founded by Tony Watts to develop research and practice in careers. At CRAC Tristram’s focus had been on postgraduate careers, and initially he was perceived by some in iCeGS as coming from outside the careers mainstream:



Professor Paul Weller helped guide iCeGS through a transitional period and remains a supporter of the Centre.



Jo Hutchinson has been a researcher at iCeGS since 2005.



David Peck and Siobhan Neary  
at a iCeGS Seminar in 2009,

“I had done a PhD in English literature and sort of drifted into careers work. I didn’t plan to move back into research, but then I went to CRAC and started doing a little bit of research on careers. I started to realise that this was really interesting and I wanted to do more.

“So by the time the job came up at iCeGS I thought this is pretty much my dream job, I’ll never get it! But, I then got invited for interview, which was really exciting until I realised that I was out of the country on holiday when the interview was happening. I had a Skype interview, Tony Watts was interviewing me, and I gave a presentation on YouTube and Bill Law was asking me questions. And so it was a bit of a baptism of fire really, because I realised at this point that iCeGS was very important because everybody who I’d ever heard of in careers turned up to interview me.

“One of the things that I was informed of when I first arrived was that I was going to be leading a brains-trust kind of seminar. So, a dozen professors from different universities, people who were expert in human resource management, education, careers, Tony was there, Bill Law was there, David Peck was there, who had written a book on the history of the careers service, people like Laurie Cohen who was at Loughborough at that time, who writes on careers in work, Wendy Hirsh... just everybody I’d ever heard of and I was supposed to be leading off. This was, basically, a terrifying encounter, but I did my best.”

“I’d never met Deirdre before I came to the Centre but she was very welcoming when I came. She met with me a number of times and passed on lots of very useful advice, told me where some of the skeletons were buried and so on. I feel very lucky to have built on the Centre that she built, she really did build something out of nothing. So when I came in I was able to inherit that and had the advantage of being able to take a step back and think, well, how do we want to turn the ship, and that’s been a very positive experience.

“One of the things that was hammered home to me by the University very early on was that this is a business and it needs to make money, and the University have taken a risk in appointing you and if you don’t deliver then you might not be around for very long (laughs). That message was given to me by a number of people in the University management, with different degrees of sugar-coating, actually. So I thought, oh right, okay. I think one of the reasons they probably gave me the job was that I was fairly



Deirdre Hughes, Tristram Hooley and Tony Watts with fellow-consultants Füsün Akkök, Annemarie Oomen and Peter Plant at a European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network meeting in 2013.

convincing in interview that I had a sort of entrepreneurial personality, an ability to win research funding and get money in. I brought some work with me from CRAC that was funded projects that I was involved in at the time. So that, I think, helped establish me as somebody credible within iCeGS, and then I got my head down and I started hustling for work and I found some.” TH

### **Research and policy**

Research in this period showed that iCeGS work was changing and diversifying into looking at technology, adult guidance, and work in higher education.



Margaret Christopoulos at the launch of *What Does 'Career' Mean to People in Their 60th Year? Reflections, Projections and Interpretations by People born in the late 1940s.*

Margaret Christopoulos and Valerie Bromage (2009) explored what “career” means to people approaching 60 and aimed to identify distinctive factors of the careers of this age-group. One of their conclusions was that: “Keeping the older worker in employment should be seen as a way of investing in new and younger workers, by the passing on of skills, experience, and a listening ear, and not a case of preventing younger people from the chance of employment.” Also looking at adults, Jo Hutchinson and Heather Jackson (2008) explored the future of career services for adults in England.

At the same time, in research for the North East 14-19 Commission, Jo Hutchinson and Gordon Parker (2009) were investigating how young people form their views on future learning and career options in the North-East of England. With Peter Stagg and Keiran Bentley (2009), Jo Hutchinson also evaluated attitudes and ambitions towards science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) at Key Stage 3 in collaboration with the Centre for Education and Industry (CEI) at Warwick University.

iCeGS’ increasing interest in higher education was reflected in a publication by Keiran Bentley and Tristram Hooley (2010) that contained 30 career stories of doctorally qualified individuals who went on to set up their own business or enterprise.

One of the other important new directions for iCeGS was explored in 2010 in two major papers commissioned by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills that considered the impact on career development and support of technology and the World Wide Web. *Careering through the Web* (Hooley, Hutchinson & Watts, 2010a) explored the role that new technologies should take in the delivery of career support. The paper argued that there were huge opportunities offered by social media and other Web 2.0 and Web 3.0 technologies for the delivery of career support. The papers concluded with reflections on the role of the careers professional in the internet age:

“Careers professionals do not have sole responsibility for all career learning or for the development of all online career exploration. They do however have an important role in supporting the development of career-related digital literacy, in quality-assuring career learning materials and in developing a strong understanding about the inter-relationship between

technological development and the pursuit of career.”

The excitement about the potential of new technologies was also picked up in *Enhancing Choice? The Role of Technology in the Career Support Market* (Hooley, Hutchinson & Watts, 2010b), which considered how new technologies could be connected to the current policy framework.

## CPD activities

The Master’s in Guidance Studies continued to run and work-based bespoke CPD programmes were developed at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Other courses included the Certificate in Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance and the Advanced Diploma in Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG), which was developed in partnership with the East Midlands Consortium. iCeGS also continued to run training courses, conferences and symposia through 2008 but thereafter focussed on delivering training directly for organisations:

“iCeGs have worked with our staff over a number of years to progress them from Level 3 and 4 standards of knowledge in careers advice and guidance delivery towards the advanced standards of professional practice reflected within the new qualification requirements for sector – Level 6 Diploma Career Guidance and Development. Immediate and longitudinal evaluation of the training has demonstrated both dramatic and incremental impact in improving practice as well as an emerging cultural shift in the affirmation of professionalism and professional identity amongst staff.

“The iCeGS training team have been excellent to work with. They have been flexible and co-operative in working with us over the years and their long-standing history and relationship in supporting staff development has earned the well-deserved respect and acclaim amongst the advisers whose practice has been advanced across Greater Manchester. Their wealth of experience and knowledge in careers research and innovation has been invaluable in not only developing the quality of the service but also raising practitioners’ aspirations and professionalism as a whole.”

Lydia Lauder, Manchester Solutions.



The Professional Events Calendar, 2008.

and glossary

Programmes

STEM subjects and jobs: A longitu  
perspective of attitudes among Key  
students, 2008 – 2010

March 2011

Jo Hutchinson and Kieran Bentley

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REPORT

Am I Still  
Needed ?

Guidance and Learning  
for Older Adults

Geoff Ford

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CeGS  
Centre for  
Guidance Studies

REPORT

Guidance  
and Individual  
Learning  
Accounts

Sara Bosley  
Amal El-Sawad  
Deirdre Hughes  
Charles Jackson  
A.G. Watts

UK  
UK COMMISS  
EMPLOYME

Careering Through The Web

The potential of Web 2.0 and 3.0  
technologies for

“iCeGS have worked with our staff over a number of years to progress them from Level 3 and 4 standards of knowledge in careers advice and guidance delivery towards the advanced standards of professional practice reflected within the new qualification requirements for sector – Level 6 Diploma Career Guidance and Development.

Immediate and longitudinal evaluation of the training has demonstrated both dramatic and incremental impact in improving practice as well as an emerging cultural shift in the affirmation of professionalism and professional identity amongst staff.

Lydia Lauder, Manchester Solutions.

# The Library



“We (NICEC) had a library, a rather good library. When it was at Hatfield we had plenty of space and it was very good, we looked after it quite well. We moved it to the University of London Institute of Education where they looked after it very well and gave us a room. But when our links with the Institute largely ended and they had to reorganise their library, they were downsizing it and wanted ours moved. We looked at options and we thought: why not move it to Derby? This was after the Centre was established. Deirdre supported the idea, and made it happen.” TW

John Marriott was appointed to organise the iCeGS library and describes how he has taken on a role as the “memory” of the sector:

“My job title is ‘Bibliographic Researcher’ but actually that doesn’t describe it very well, I don’t think that there’s many of us. Actually, I’ve never done research to see if that job actually exists or if we just invented it for our own uses! But basically I manage the website, I manage the library, I do literature searches, I do anything that involves the literature.

“Also, I’ve been here a long time and I’ve got a weird memory. I will probably forget your name in the next five minutes, possibly, but in this strange careers world a lot of the stuff’s stuck in my head, so I do know quite a lot about this field. You can sort of ask me questions that... probably there’s only a few people in the world who can answer them – possibly two of them are sat outside this door – but there’s not many others and we’ve just got a weird breadth and esoteric knowledge of the careers world.

“Initially I would have been thought of more as a librarian giving information, which would be: I’ll do a literature search for you, this is the stuff, and throw it at them. Now it would be: I’ve done the literature search, I’ve written it up, here you are, that’s that bit, that section of the report. I mean, a traditional library would be ‘here’s a list of books, here’s a list of journals, do what you want with it’. Obviously, that’s long gone.”

JM

You can sort of ask me questions that... probably there's only a few people in the world who can answer them – possibly two of them are sat outside this door – but there's not many others and we've just got a weird breadth and esoteric knowledge of the careers world.

John Marriot, iCeGS' Bibliographic Researcher. 'An amazing talent for finding information'.



“He (John) really has an amazing talent for finding information – and I think that I’m quite good at that, actually, that’s one of my strengths – but, invariably, I will spend half an hour trying to find something and he will spend two minutes and send me a list of 30 references.” TH

The library continues to evolve and has recently been re-sited within the University’s East Tower alongside the iCeGS offices.

# GOOD TIMING

Implementing STEM careers  
strategy in secondary schools

Final report of the STEM Careers Awareness Timeline Pilot  
November 2012



# New Era, New Government, New Challenges (2011–2013)



Prime minister David Cameron  
and Deputy Prime Minister Nick  
Clegg outside Number 10  
Downing Street, May 2010

In May 2010 a Coalition Government of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats was formed. As with the Labour Government in 1997, this meant changing priorities and attitudes. Since 2010 the Centre’s research has addressed a range of themes associated with the changes that have been made within the sector. In particular, research has focused on the career guidance workforce, the role of technology in the reframing of careers services, widening participation to higher education, youth careers services, careers advice and guidance in schools, the interface between STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) careers and careers education and guidance, and adult careers services. Particularly important has been the work that the Centre has undertaken looking at the closure of Connexions.

As well as policy issues there were immediate practical issues for iCeGS. For Tristram, newly in place as Head of Centre, these wider political changes were to shape his time at iCeGS:

“To be honest I didn’t really predict the impact that it was going to have. Firstly, one of the things that happened in the run-up to the election and the immediate aftermath of the election is that work stopped appearing from Government. There was simply nobody around, everyone’s out campaigning and so they’re not instructing civil servants ‘we’ve got to find about this’, and so the work started to slow down. And obviously there’s a period when a new Government comes in, even if it was very sympathetic to the things that we were interested in, when they are gathering their thoughts and not commissioning the kind of work that we do.

“I remember going to work on the train one morning and opening up the Metro, and there was an article about how the Government was going to have a bonfire of quangos and all these different organisations. Quangos, it was saying, were terrible things, the Government shouldn’t have them, they’re all wasting money. And I looked down this list and this was a list of our clients, it was complete – everybody we’d ever done any work for in

“In all the days I’ve been doing this work there are no typical days. I talk to a lot of policy-makers, stakeholders, employers, strategic decision-makers and it can be relevant to whatever piece of study or research that I’m doing, but sometimes I’m with young people, and sometimes I’m with a learner group and we’re doing observations or we’re doing interviews with people relevant to the piece of consultancy.”

MS

the last five years was on this list. Now, actually they didn’t cut them all, and Government is often fond of announcing cuts which it actually doesn’t go on to make, but they have cut some of them; it has made a difference to us. Some of these were good organisations and it is very regrettable that they’ve removed them. Even those organisations that stayed were thrown into doubt and had a period of being very internally focussed or negotiating with government and weren’t doing any of the work that they were supposed to be doing.” TH

The context of change and cuts in funding resulted in some big changes for iCeGS both in terms of staffing and strategy:

“One of the things that’s happened since the current Government has come in is that the environment we operated in has become more challenging. As a result of that we re-structured in 2011/12 and we lost some staff, but we also brought in some new staff and we re-thought how we run our business. We have a strong focus on career and career development, career guidance, careers education and we are interested in those concepts in their own right but also how they connect to others. And that, academically and intellectually, is correct... And so what that has done, which has been a strategy that we’ve pursued, it has encouraged us to diversify. Now, careers is quite a good concept when you’re diversifying because it connects to almost everything. So it connects to human resource management, it connects to education more generally. One of the areas where we’ve done a lot of work is widening participation to higher education, which has also been quite challenged by the Government, but not to the extent that career guidance has, and we’ve continued to work in there.” TH

Moira Sutton joined the team in 2012 from a background in management and freelance consultancy in workforce development:

“In all the days I’ve been doing this work there are no typical days. I talk to a lot of policy-makers, stakeholders, employers, strategic decision-makers and it can be relevant to whatever piece of study or research that I’m doing, but sometimes I’m with young people, and sometimes I’m with a learner group and we’re doing observations or we’re doing interviews with people relevant to the piece of consultancy. Some days you’re writing, and you can be writing for one project or two projects, and other days you’re doing half an hour of one thing and 20 minutes of another



The iCeGS office in the East Tower, 2013.

and 15 minutes of something else, and then the phone's going for something completely different. So there is no standard day, but that's the great (thing), it's certainly never boring. It's very busy, very interesting, very diverse." MS

Also during this period iCeGS moved into new offices in the East Tower. This is where the School of Education is and so the move has helped to integrate the Centre with the School of Education:

"To be honest I wasn't looking forward to the move. It is a lot of hassle isn't it? But it was actually really good for us. It made us spring-clean twelve years of files and documents and brought us over into more day-to-day contact with the rest of the School of Education. Before we moved I didn't really know who was in the School. Now I see people every day and you have a chat in the corridor. This is gradually leading us towards working together, which is good for all of us I think." TH

## Changes in career guidance policy

The title of Tony Watts' paper 'False dawns, bleak sunset: the Coalition Government's policies on career guidance' (Watts, 2013) sums up how many in the guidance world were feeling three years after the general election. Initially, the Coalition had been positive about the idea of an all-age careers service although this position was soon subverted by other agendas:

“(Tony Watts’ inaugural lecture) was looking at the whole careers field and looking at the way it might go. No one, incidentally, at that time, would have forecast the way it’s gone now.”

“(Tony Watts’ inaugural lecture) was looking at the whole careers field and looking at the way it might go. No one, incidentally, at that time, would have forecast the way it’s gone now. No one expected such a strange government as we have at the moment. And I say that not politically, I was thinking about Mrs Thatcher the other day, she did far better on the careers and employment side than this government has at all.” DP

Following the election of the Government, Tristram Hooley met with civil servants in the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills and the Department for Education to discuss the evidence base around careers work and input into the emergent policy. This engagement with Government has continued, with staff from the Centre continuing to meet with representatives of government departments and key government agencies (HEFCE, Skills Funding Agency, UKCES etc.):

MS

“The Government made various decisions about careers which were counter to what they said they were going to do in their manifestos. So by 2011 it became apparent that, actually, this Government was going to be one which was not going to support careers work, which we thought they might do, but was actually going to cut it really quite heavily. And that’s bad, and that is something which we have challenged in its own right and for its own reasons. But also it does challenge somewhat the viability of having a centre which is specialised in careers education and guidance.”

TH

While the Centre has sought to build a productive engagement with Government, it has also published a number of research papers which have been critical of Government policy. In 2011 Hooley and Watts published *Careers Work with Young People: Collapse or Transition* and took an overview of the “raft of policies and funding decisions that are radically reframing the way in which careers work is delivered to young people”:



“When this Government came in we realised that what they were doing, effectively, was closing down the Connexions service, cutting a huge amount of money and funding from it. Now, nobody was going to fund us to do research into that and the way it was being done. It wasn’t immediately apparent, the media couldn’t quite get their head around what was happening because it was not a simple cut, it was not a national service, it was a local service which local councils were being advised they no longer had to provide, so they all reacted differently and some retained it but in effect Government was making a decision that Connexions was not important and it should be cut. We could have waited and tried to get research funding to investigate that but we probably wouldn’t have been doing it for another ten years. So we decided at that point we’ve got to look at this, this is absolutely critical to what we’re interested in, it’s about policy, it’s about careers, it’s about what the Government are doing, it’s also just plain wrong, the decision that they were making, and so we decided to just do a piece of research which came out, it’s been published as *Transition or Collapse* (2011). Tony and I worked on it and we did a sort of empirical investigation into what different councils were doing and tried to draw together all the information that was out there, and we concluded that there was a very substantial set of cuts and redundancies and various other things that were going on that was going to seriously impact on schools and young people. That got cited in parliament and various other things, it didn’t successfully change the policy, which was very frustrating, but nonetheless I think it was an example of a piece of work which, without iCeGS, nobody else would have done, and it’s the kind of choice that we make some of the time to do work that is important as well as work that is lucrative.” TH

While the paper posed many questions for Government, Local Authorities, schools and the career profession, it also stated: “The situation continues to develop in a highly dynamic way and it is likely that we remain some way from a stable situation”.

In 2012 a new paper from iCeGS and the Pearson Think Tank started with the observation that “Careers work in English schools has endured much turbulence recently”. The Government’s policy of placing the responsibility for careers education in the hands of schools, without clear guidelines and with no funding, raised the question of how schools would

cope. The paper made a number of recommendations including monitoring the effect of the policies on vulnerable and less advantaged learners and encouraging schools to link careers to the curriculum (Hooley, Marriott, Watts & Coiffait, 2012).

During 2012, the House of Commons Education Committee decided to launch an inquiry into careers guidance for young people, and invited Tristram Hooley to be its specialist adviser. Its cross-party report was widely welcomed for the quality of its evidence and the robustness of its conclusions and recommendations. While many of these have not yet been accepted by the Government, Tristram's involvement demonstrated the widespread respect for iCeGS' work and took it closer to the policy-making process.



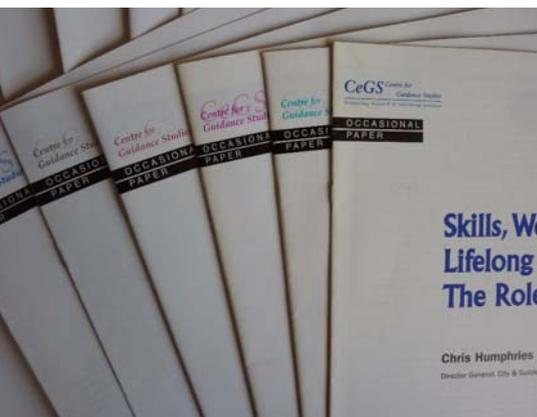
### How iCeGS' work has changed

“What has happened in the past is that we’ve had CPD and research as two separate but inter-related elements, and normally we’d have a really good research year, we’d have a bad CPD year, and the next year we’d have a really strong CPD year and a poor research year, so the two always balanced each other out. We don’t have that anymore so it is very much more a collective in that everybody works on, you know, Jo and Tris have worked on the MA; me, Nicki and Tris have worked on some of the careers education programmes; I’ve worked with Jo on STEM research and we all work on everything now really.” **SN**

“What we do now is probably more literature-based, more conceptually based. We work with a wider range of organisations rather than working with individual associates as much. What we tend to do now is to work with research partners so that we’ve got links with other universities and other research centres a bit like us.” **JH**

One example of iCeGS' broader focus was a project that it undertook with Paul Weller for the Equality Challenge Unit. This project explored the role of religion and belief in higher education:

“I’m a researcher and I also worked with iCeGS on a funded project with the Equality Challenge Unit that connects with my substantive areas of work in religion or belief discrimination equality issues and policy issues. That was just over a year’s funded project by the Equality Challenge Unit. We pulled in some colleagues from other parts of the University, but



As well as reports iCeGS publishes many occasional papers, articles and reviews.

fundamentally iCeGS provided the vehicle for it, did the online survey, I brought some of the interpretation and disciplinary field credibility and so on. I thought it was a fantastic thing, I really enjoyed doing it with them.”

PW

One of the features of the past few years at iCeGS has been the increasing number of publications. Nineteen papers were published in 2011, and 28 in 2012:

“I’ve very strongly pushed, and I was encouraged in this by Tony [Watts], for publication. Everything we do should be published – I mean not everything because there are some things that you can’t publish, but by and large the default setting should be that whatever we do, we publish it. Even if it’s not the world’s most ground-breaking piece of work it would be better if it was out in the public domain. And that’s a sort of principle, I suppose, in the sense that I think generally we’re spending public money and people should be able to find out what we’ve done. Also a frustration of the amount of stuff in this field that’s been done and not published, when you go back to look at it and people talk about things that happened in the past and you can’t find them, I find that very frustrating.”

TH

The last few years have also seen the themes of iCeGS’ work changing. Whereas in the past the Centre’s output was closely tied to the Connexions Service, recent work has explored career support from a wider range of perspectives. These have included work looking at widening participation to higher education, the careers of researchers, STEM careers work, careers work in schools and careers work with unemployed and low-skilled people. Tristram explains how he has pursued some of his interests through iCeGS:

“I brought some higher education focus which iCeGS had never really had in great amounts, particularly I brought the researcher focus and in the first couple of years I was there we did a lot of work on researchers and postgraduate students and their careers. And I also brought an interest in, which was really just an interest at that point, in social media and technology more generally, but I’m really most interested in social media. We then started to tender for some stuff around that, we got a couple of projects from the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, which were about technology and careers, and it was a very under-

researched and under-theorised area, it's somewhat better now, and we played some role in that I think." TH

A new emphasis on the role of social media has resulted in publications such as *What is Online Research? Using the Internet for Social Science Research*, *Social Media: A Guide for Researchers* (Hooley, Marriott & Wellens, 2012) and *How the Internet Changed Career: Framing the Relationship between Career Development and Online Technologies* (Hooley, 2012). It also influences iCeGS' ways of working:

"In the last few years I have really concentrated on experimenting with social media at Tristram's request. We are all blogging, Tweeting, and bookmarking like mad and I now have a digital presence the envy of many (and I know the difference between blogging, tweeting, bookmarking, Wikis, podcasts, telephone conferencing, webinars, etc!). Digital literacy has become a regular topic of conversation and has been incorporated into many of our teaching and research activities. This has been quite a learning curve for many of us but our online presence is often remarked upon by people who follow our posts. I think mapping the iCeGS network would be fascinating. In the past you might read down an email list of contacts. If we were to undertake this exercise now we would map a network which keeps us in regular contact with individuals in virtually every school, college and university in the UK, every company and organisation offering career development activities in the UK, and many more in Europe and the wider world and many interested and committed practitioners across the world who wish to develop career development practice based on a strong evidence base. I am sometimes amazed at the places where my LinkedIn network live and work." NM

"We are all blogging, Tweeting, and bookmarking like mad and I now have a digital presence the envy of many (and I know the difference between blogging, tweeting, bookmarking, Wikis, podcasts, telephone conferencing, webinars, etc!)."

NM

# The Website

The screenshot shows the homepage of the International Centre for Guidance Studies (ICeGS) at the University of Derby. The header includes the university logo and the center's name. A navigation menu is visible on the left. The main content area features a search bar, a 'Home' link, and a 'Contact Us' link. Below this, there are sections for 'News', 'Research and Consultancy', 'Publications', 'Staff and Associates', 'Learning Programmes', 'Training', and 'About Us'. A central banner highlights 'Research & Project News' with a sub-heading 'Researching professional identity through postgraduate professional development?'. Below the banner, there are three columns: 'Latest News', 'Research & Project News', and 'Popular Links'. The 'Latest News' column lists several articles with dates and titles. The 'Research & Project News' column lists articles with dates and titles. The 'Popular Links' column lists several links with titles. At the bottom, there are sections for 'Contact Us' and 'Site Map'.

The Centre has invested heavily in the maintenance and development of its website. The website serves as a resource base for the sector and features a regular news update and a monthly synthesis of research information and policy developments. The Centre works with funders and publishers to make as much material freely available online as possible through the University of Derby Online Research Archive (UDORA) research archive. Centre staff are also encouraged to develop their social media profile, to engage in blogging and microblogging and to share their research and thinking with networks of practitioners and policy-makers:

“The website is important, I think it is a good shop-window on what we do and there’s no other website in the careers world has as much information on it and, more importantly, makes it available for free. So people, as they develop their careers, will know about us because they have used our publications because they are readily accessible, and when they Google they’ll find them.” JM

“The team’s strong reputation on career-related issues meant that almost as soon as we looked at the topic they cropped up repeatedly.” Louis Coiffait, Head of Research, the Pearson Think Tank and Office of the Chief Education Adviser.

The screenshot shows the publications page of the International Centre for Guidance Studies (ICeGS) at the University of Derby. The header includes the university logo and the center's name. A navigation menu is visible on the left. The main content area features a search bar, a 'Home' link, and a 'Contact Us' link. Below this, there are sections for 'News', 'Research and Consultancy', 'Publications', 'Staff and Associates', 'Learning Programmes', 'Training', and 'About Us'. A central banner highlights 'Publications' with a sub-heading 'Below is a list of ICeGS publications that are available to download, it includes material that ICeGS has produced in partnership with other organisations. The attached zip file is used for all ICeGS publications. All downloadable publications are archived in PDF format and require an Acrobat Reader to view. If you don't have this installed, please download the software.' Below the banner, there are two columns: '2014' and '2013'. The '2014' column lists several articles with dates and titles. The '2013' column lists several articles with dates and titles. At the bottom, there are sections for 'Contact Us' and 'Site Map'.

When CeGS added the 'i' to its name it had already established international links and aspired to do more work internationally. Over the next five years the amount of international work increased considerably and Deirdre Hughes' decision to brand the Centre as 'International' can now be seen as completely justified:

“The website is important, I think it is a good shop-window on what we do and there's no other website in the careers world has as much information on it and, more importantly, makes it available for free. So people, as they develop their careers, will know about us because they have used our publications because they are readily accessible, and when they Google they'll find them.”

JM

“We're doing more and more international work and sitting in the office as I frequently do on my own, I look up – we've got a board at the end of the office and it tells you where people are – and I frequently see Jo's in Bilbao in Spain, and Nicki's in Croatia and Siobhan's in Malaysia or whatever, we're routinely all over the world. I'm going to Italy once this month and once next month, and I'm going to Estonia once next month. Jo had a period when she seemed to be in a different European country almost every day. I've just been brought into the European Lifelong Guidance Network as a consultant to that, so that's a Europe-wide project, I've done work in Canada, Siobhan did work in Sri Lanka. We are just, I think, very strongly focussed internationally now and to some extent that's about what's going on in the UK but I think also, as our body of work and as the quality of our publications and the amount of our publications have increased: if somebody does a search for quite a number of different issues they come up with us. And so they start to then ask us questions and that builds relationships, and then you get invitations to go over and speak or to get involved with projects.” TH

“I think I've been very fortunate in some ways because I've done quite a lot of the international work. I did a three-month project in Sri Lanka working for an Australian Aid organisation two years ago, which was just brilliant because I didn't do anything but one project and I could just do that thing every day for three months. That was wonderful because here you're working on five, six projects, you're writing tenders, you're sorting finance out, you're doing all of these other things so actually having the luxury of just doing one thing and that was amazing. I went out for three months and we developed a training programme and delivered it to over 260 careers teachers in schools around Sri Lanka, we developed an online website with a load of materials and resources, I wrote an implementation strategy for how they could make this work, and sustainability, and that was really, really excellent I must admit. So I'm just off now on Friday to Malaysia to do a piece of work for another university, looking at university careers services in Malaysia and China.” SN



Siobhan Neary with a group of teachers and trainers in Trincomalee, Sri Lanka in April 2011. Siobhan has written about “challenges for young people and career practitioners in Sri Lanka” in Neary (2013).



# Looking Forward

“As the Centre moves forward into the next phase of its life I look forward to being involved in interesting projects which stretch me and help me to develop further perspectives as a career development professional. What we do here at the Centre has a benefit to the careers professionals and their clients in the UK and around the world.”

NM

“It has been interesting reflecting back on iCeGS’ history and my relationship with the Centre. We have grown together but the staff at iCeGS and the work that they have undertaken have been an important influence in my own professional development. As the Centre moves forward into the next phase of its life I look forward to being involved in interesting projects which stretch me and help me to develop further perspectives as a career development professional. What we do here at the Centre has a benefit to the careers professionals and their clients in the UK and around the world.” NM

As iCeGS moves into its 16th year its history continues to develop. While the interest in career development and career guidance remains consistent both the context and the personnel continue to change. 2013 saw Moira Sutton leaving the Centre and new researcher Emma Langley starting. The Centre ended the year with an annual lecture from Wendy Hirsh which discussed whether career development was too important to be left to professionals.

Moving into 2014 the Centre continues to engage with the twist and turns of Government policy and also to increase its influence overseas. 2014 is also likely to see Tony Watts retiring from active involvement in the field and with the Centre. This will be a major challenge for the Centre, but already plans are being made for new Professors to take the Centre forward.

## **iCeGS and the University**

Looking forward to the next decade and a half, iCeGS finds itself with a secure place within the School (soon to be College) of Education and a growing understanding of its value across the institution as a whole.

Guy Daly (former Dean of the Faculty of Education, Health and Science) summed up how iCeGS’ position has changed:

“Since I’ve been here, certainly over the past couple of years, 18 months, we’ve seen a dramatic shift, I think, in terms of people’s perception at

“I would like to see long-term, for example, everyone who does a BA Education doing a module on Career Education. I haven’t been able to get them to think about this yet but that’s where I would like to go. Career should be one of the distinctive features about doing education at Derby as we’ve got this centre of excellence in career education and guidance here.”

TH

University executive level and outwith the Faculty, as it were, in terms of iCeGS’s intrinsic value...I think it’s putting the Faculty, and the University, on the map in terms of the work they’re doing for external contractors. It’s doing (work) for HEFCE, it’s doing work for universities, it’s doing work for local authorities, the Skills Funding Agency, and also some European stuff as well, and maybe even more widely.” GD

“At the beginning of the cycle in the Faculty it wasn’t so to speak washing its face financially, and that’s always a high risk and a pressure for everybody else. Whereas now I think both its actual financial performance has come into line with how I believe it’s seen externally and now parts of the University at least understand better what it’s substantive concerns and remit are. I think particularly since a decision was taken a year, just over a year ago, to extend the focus from the classic language of careers or guidance to vocational stuff more generally, I think that’s helped also with the kind of adoption of it as ‘ours’ by broader areas, certainly in the School of Education. That has quite a resonance with where the University as a whole likes to see itself as sitting in terms of the kind of higher education that it provides.” PW

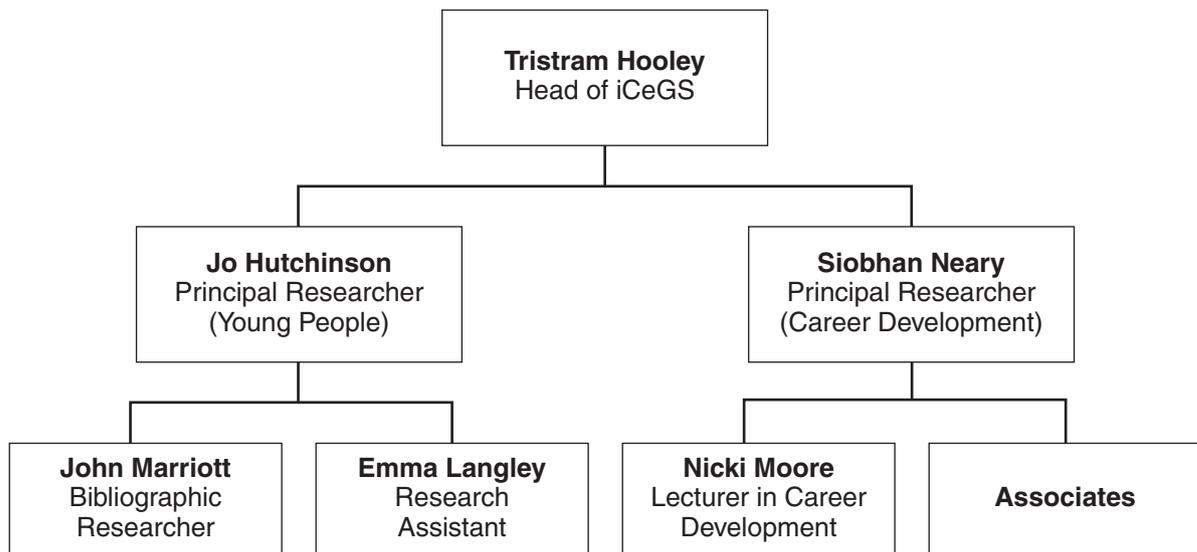
“I think we’ve moved from a situation where iCeGS was a bit of an oddity that the University didn’t really know what to do with, it kind of liked it at times but at other times it was frustrated with it, to something that is much more embedded in the mainstream thinking of what the University is and what it does. And one thing that happened before I arrived was that it was brought into the School of Education, which is good from my point-of-view. I tend to think about career with quite an educational research sort of perspective, so bringing us into the School of Education was a good idea, and we’re then contributing to the university’s REF submission in Education, and I think we would like to continue to embed our provision within the School of Education.” TH

Looking forward, Tristram Hooley explains how he would like to see the Centre continuing this mission to embed itself in the mainstream of the School of Education and into the University as a whole:

“I would like to see long-term, for example, everyone who does a BA Education doing a module on Career Education. I haven’t been able to get them to think about this yet but that’s where I would like to go. Career should be one of the distinctive features about doing education at Derby

as we've got this centre of excellence in career education and guidance here. And I think we're definitely moving in that direction, that we are thought about and considered as part of the assets of the University. Another thing that's helped us with that obviously we've had some successful years in terms of finance, but we've also done reasonably well in press coverage and things like that and that seems to get noticed, positively noticed, so I think we are much more embedded in the University than we were in the past."

### **iCeGS Organisational Structure: October 2013**



### **Technology and the future**

iCeGS has done a lot of work looking at the interface between new technologies and career education and guidance. This is an area that seems likely only to intensify in importance in the future.

"The thing that's excited me most was this idea of social media. Why it excited me more than some of these other things was that it struck me that it actually was new and different enough that it had the potential to change the way in which the world worked, education worked, work

# ADVENTURES IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Thoughts about career and other stuff from Tristram Hooley

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## ➔ Careers work in sixth form



Posted: March 10, 2014 in [career](#), [children](#), [schools](#)

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A presentation that I'm giving in Hertfordshire tomorrow.

[Careers Work in the Sixth Form](#)

## ➔ Using social media and digital technologies to support career building



Posted: March 10, 2014 in [career](#), [technology](#), [tools](#)

Tags: [career](#), [career building](#), [digital career literacy](#), [social media](#)

A presentation that I'm giving tomorrow in Hertfordshire. Features a new rendering of the 7 Cs diagram - wow!

operated. There were various general books that talk about this, but very few people who'd really looked at it with respect to career and career guidance. What I was really trying to do was to say well if we've got this this new technological phenomenon that means that people are routinely connected with everybody else that they've ever known, they're in constant conversation, you can find out information about what people are doing, who they are, where they're working, what those jobs entail, you can look at what people are saying about their employers and so on. This must change the way in which our careers work, it seemed to me obvious that that was the case.

"I think there is a tendency sometimes for some people who talk about it (social media) with respect to career to talk about it mainly in terms of its damage. So if you go on Facebook and you put something nasty about



your employer, you might get the sack, that kind of discussion. That is actually good advice, don't go on Facebook and make fun of your employer or say something really stupid: it is important that careers advisers think about that and encourage their clients to think about that. But there are opportunities there as well as pitfalls. So one of the things we are thinking about is: what are the opportunities for individuals in career building? We've done some work on that but the other thing is then well if there are all these opportunities and pitfalls, what does it mean for careers advisers? We've come up with various ideas but basically one of the things is that it changes the career management skills you need to be successful in your life. You need to think about those things, about what you put online and what you don't, and if you're no good at doing these things, if you won't engage with them, then there's at least a possibility that there's a detrimental impact on your career. The other thing is it enables careers advisers to discuss and engage with their clients in new ways, so using blogging, which I've written about, or using Twitter or Facebook and so on, you've got various different ways. It seems to me these are actually very fundamental and very major things that, if you're thinking forward to the future, will radically change the way in which individuals pursue their careers and careers professionals engage with their clients and with other people. So, social media seems to me very important. I've done quite a lot of work on it, I think there's a lot still to be done on it and I would hope that people continue to be interested in it and to fund us to do more work to explore this more deeply over the next few years." TH

### **“Keep on hammering out the research”**

Looking into the future, iCeGS is committed to continuing its research, making its findings available and sharing them with practitioners and policy-makers. It is this ability to relate critically, but positively, to what is going on that is at the heart of what iCeGS is about:

“One of the things that makes us distinctive, I think, from private-sector research consultancies is that we don't only do work to make money. I mean we do, obviously we need to do that, but we also play a big role in the careers sector, which doesn't make you any money but is, I think, part of what makes iCeGS what it is – the fact that we're not just somebody who sits outside the sector and does research that people pay us for, we're part of the careers sector, we're involved in it, we're involved in the

“I think iCeGS has to... be seen as the bastion of reason and logical argument and evidence. And I think it’s the evidence base that they’ve got to play on and be able to say ‘and here is the evidence that supports this view’.”

JP

lobbying and the politics and all the rest of it. Now I think we also try and have some critical distance but I would usually describe us as a kind of critical friend to the careers sector, so we do projects that we think are worth doing.” TH

“I think that if the Centre is too closely aligned with ‘the careers sector’ then there is a danger that we would lose a sense of objectivity, so if we are too closely aligned to ‘the sector’ that compromises our ability to be critical, and if we can’t be critical then we can’t be academic and therefore we have no function.” JH

“It seems to me that iCeGS should continue to position itself nationally and internationally as the leading UK specialist research centre on career guidance and career development, working at the interface between theory and research, policy and practice. It should seek a balance between these three areas, between work related to young people and to adults, and between national and international work, with synergies across these different interfaces.” TW

It is difficult to be sure what the Centre will be working on, but this mission of being at the centre of research, policy and practice ensure that there will continue to be lots of work to do:

“I think just keep on hammering out the research. There have been some quite fundamental shifts in thinking and it is about what basic skills are needed for employability, what do employers look for, and what influences them. And you know that’s the current, or the coming, agenda, so let’s concentrate our efforts there. The agenda will probably change in five years, fine, of course it will. But to start with let’s hammer on about employability and how do we make our population employable, how do we make them realistic about the labour market. So we get endless papers saying they’re not employable and they haven’t got a realistic view about the labour market, well let’s focus on how we do.” JP

At the time of writing, the careers world is once again in uncertain territory. The plans and policies of the current Government are not clearly defined and the way career guidance will work in the future is unclear:

“In 1998 there was a careers service properly funded for adults and young people and now in 2013 we have a careers service for adults, sort of, the service for young people has been completely stripped out and

“But also, I think, the way in which we work as practitioners is changing, with social media, with the digital age, all of that side of things, and so supporting people to explore and research in new areas and new ways of doing things is very important as well.”

JB

not funded properly. So overall you could argue that the Centre has not had a massive impact because all of the things we've said have been ignored. But this is only a recent development. Has it helped practice? Of course it has. Has it helped people develop their thinking and how they run their services? Yes, it has. Has it supported students to get qualifications? Yes, it has. It's had a massive impact.” **JM**

“We're not in the 'turning a handle and producing a product' business, it's more complicated. So, I worry for the field because I worry that over the time that we've tried collectively to influence policy there have been too many instances where they (politicians) haven't got it. In the situation now where we're desperately short of cash, the service is very vulnerable.” **SB**

“I think iCeGS has to... be seen as the bastion of reason and logical argument and evidence. And I think it's the evidence base that they've got to play on and be able to say 'and here is the evidence that supports this view'.” **JP**

For those whose job it is to give career advice, iCeGS is a valuable resource:

“It's important to be able to continue to demonstrate the impact of what careers practitioners actually achieve and how it helps, and how it has a wider impact. It's not just about people's careers, it's about people's lives; really it's about society, contribution to society, which may not be a paid job, it may be a volunteering role or whatever it may be, but I think it's hugely important that the Centre continues to demonstrate impact and help the profession demonstrate impact. But also, I think, the way in which we work as practitioners is changing, with social media, with the digital age, and so supporting people to explore and research in new areas and new ways of doing things is very important as well.” **JB**

### **Final thoughts**

Fifteen years ago CeGS was created with a mission to identify and tackle research and guidance needs, analyse developments locally, nationally and internationally, and share and develop information for the guidance community. In doing this it followed in the steps of many other people and organisations devoted to helping people in what is one of the most important aspects of all our lives: what we do with our working lives.

As even this brief look at the life of iCeGS illustrates, policy in this sector

has been variable. If it is currently more unpredictable than in previous decades, then the role of iCeGS, and organisations like it, is even more important than ever:

“I think career guidance is going to continue to change and I think the current workforce and the current way it is organised may not survive over the next decade. But I am absolutely confident that there will always be a place within education and training, and life more generally, for a service and set of activities that helps people to think about their futures. I think it’s a massive flaw in education if education tells you that all you’re doing here is learning for exams, and it has nothing to do with the rest of your life. It will be a flaw within its own terms because it will just not motivate kids or adults to engage in learning.

“So I think that however it gets organised, government and educational organisations will ultimately always conclude that they need a part of the education system that is strongly engaged with people’s futures and with how people fit into what opportunities are out there for them. And I think we have expertise in that and we also have a role, a quite important role in difficult times like now, to be the kind of memory of the sector, because there’s an awful lot that’s been learnt about how you do careers education and guidance well. And when new players come into the field, they’ll set it up from scratch, and they’ll do some things new and exciting and different, but they’ll also make a lot of the mistakes and do a lot of the same things that people did in the past. I think having us around will hopefully be one way to pass on some of the learning that has gone in the past to the new situation.” TH

“But I am absolutely confident that there will always be a place within education and training, and life more generally, for a service and set of activities that helps people to think about their futures. I think it’s a massive flaw in education if education tells you that all you’re doing here is learning for exams, and it has nothing to do with the rest of your life.”

TH

# Sources

The main source of information for this booklet has been interviews with staff members, Associates of iCeGS, and former employees and friends of the Centre. Thanks are due to the following people for generously sparing their time: Julie Blant, Simon Bysse, Guy Daly, Tristram Hooley, Jo Hutchinson, John Marriott, Nicki Moore, Siobhan Neary, Jean Pardoe, David Peck, Moira Sutton, Chris Warren, Tony Watts, Paul Weller.

Further information came from iCeGS Newsletters and research publications, from Tony Watts' archives, and from two books: *Careers Services. History, Policy and Practice in the United Kingdom* by David Peck (2004); and *Some Kind of Bridge* by Daniel Smith (2010).

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