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# THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR GUIDANCE STUDIES (ICEGS)



**NICKI MOORE AND PROFESSOR SIOBHAN NEARY (ICEGS): AT THE CUTTING EDGE OF RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE FOR 25 YEARS**

**W**hat do the following all have in common: Google, Titanic the movie, the Furby, the ‘Rachel’ haircut and iCeGS? The answer is that all are celebrating their 25th anniversaries in 2023.

iCeGS is a small team of researchers and lecturers based in the Institute of Education at the University of Derby. As it is our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary we wanted to shout about our achievements over a very interesting period of career history.

During the last 25 years we have had to navigate changes in government and therefore significant changes to the landscape of career development policy and practice, which have included: the devolution of the UK to create four different models of delivering career guidance; the creation and demise of Connexions; the amalgamation of four of the professional associations to form one new one, the CDI; the introduction of fees for higher education students; the transition in England of the responsibility for providing careers support for young people directly to schools and colleges and the introduction of the Gatsby Benchmarks... we could go on and on.

CeGS (the Centre for Guidance Studies), was established in 1998 after a discussion between Professor Tony



Watts and the then Vice-Chancellor of the University of Derby (Roger Waterhouse). Roger was also the chair of the Derbyshire Careers Service and was well versed in the way that this organisation collaborated with the four other career services as The East Midlands Careers Consortium. CeGS was established through financial contributions from all of the careers companies and the University. When the Centre was ten years old, a decision



was taken to re-brand. We added the 'i' and became the International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS) to reflect the increasing international work that we were undertaking.

#### Our research

Staff at iCeGS have contributed to some of the most far-reaching research in the sector - and we write about it prolifically! We have provided research to a variety of industrial sectors to help them understand barriers to recruitment, including in the food and drinks manufacturing sector, house building and logistics. At a local and regional level we have provided support to guidance providers, local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). At a national level we have undertaken work for organisations such as Careers England, The Service Children's Progression Alliance, The National Careers Service, The Career Development Institute, Skills Development Scotland, Careers Wales, and the Careers & Enterprise Company. The insights that we develop because of our research contribute to our evidence-based teaching and consultancy activities.

#### International work

In the iCeGS office we have a scratch-off wall map of all the countries which we have worked in over the years. The only continent with any blanks is South America (we are open to invitation). Some countries and regions receive regular visitors from iCeGS, but some are less frequently visited and certainly very exotic. We were all jealous when Siobhan visited both Sri Lanka and Mauritius to deliver consultancy activities! The team were sorry when Brexit ended our access to Erasmus funding. We have developed an extensive body of work with European partners; the last project ended in 2021 but we have fond memories of the projects and of the friends and colleagues with whom we have worked over the years.

iCeGS is also very hospitable and during our existence we have welcomed visitors from Canada, Denmark, Germany Japan and Pakistan. This year we are resuming our international visitor programme after the pandemic with visitors from Australia and China.

#### How have we influenced policy?

The small team at iCeGS have made a significant contribution to local, regional and UK wide policy for career development. At a local level, iCeGS team members contribute to discussions with the devolved governments of the UK and with local and regional stakeholders such as LEPs, careers hubs and guidance providers. We have contributed to the development of several frameworks for professional practice and have undertaken training needs analysis to inform the training and development of practitioners in career guidance and educational settings both in the UK and around the world.

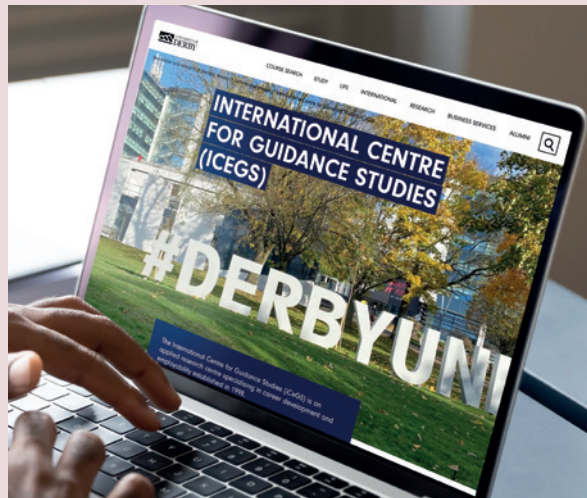
Many people do not realise that the researchers at iCeGS worked with Professor Sir John Holman to gather the data needed to shape the Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance. Furthermore, we evaluated the impact of the Gatsby Benchmarks in the North East pilot. In fact, the Gatsby Benchmarks remain one of the most significant contributions which iCeGS has made to English school and college-based career guidance policy.

But it doesn't stop there! iCeGS professors continue to support the sector through their involvement in the Career Development Policy Group, the APPG for Skills, Careers and Employment and provide evidence to select committees when called to do so.

#### Practice

The staff at iCeGS have always supported the sector through a variety of training and CPD activities. We continue to provide a free, annual public lecture. Our first was given by Professor Tony Watts; we are pleased that this year's lecture will be delivered on December 6th by Professor Pete Robertson from Edinburgh Napier University and you are warmly invited. Throughout the years we have also run seminars, events and conferences, often in collaboration with other bodies including the National Career Leaders' Conference and the National Research Conference. We also offer bespoke training packages to organisations on request.

Over the years we have offered several iterations of our flagship master's programme. In 2017 we launched our MA Careers Education and Coaching and since then have trained over 70 students. Nothing stands still forever and this year, the MA has been revalidated and will be launched this Autumn as the MA in Career Guidance and Development. We can't wait to welcome students onto the programme.



#### Conclusion

Throughout our 25 years, our staff have worked tirelessly to apply our research, teaching and consultancy skills to understand the real-world issues which confront practitioners and stakeholders in this wide and varied field and to help develop solutions. Throughout our history and whatever the government, our mission has been to connect research, policy and practice. The team were determined that our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary would not go unrecognised and uncelebrated. We hope that by producing this quick guide to our activities and impacts that you will join us in recognising a small but dedicated group of researchers and lecturers who work tirelessly on behalf of the Career Development sector. If you want to read more about iCeGS you can find more information about our work and all of our publications here: [derby.ac.uk/research/centres-groups/icegs/](http://derby.ac.uk/research/centres-groups/icegs/).

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