EAAL Impact Forums 2017-19
Forum: Wales
Theme: The future of work
Date: 5ᵗʰ July 2018

Organisations represented	13 participants – 4 L&W and 7 other organisations representing FE providers, HE, TUC, third sector and Wales Centre for Public Policy. Although a relatively short meeting, this was well attended with a good level of engagement and quality of discussion.
1. Key evidence sources presented	Mair Bell, Senior Research Officer at Wales Centre for Public Policy, presented findings fo research into *the Future of Work in Wales.* Research report available at: https://www.wcpp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/The-Future-of-Work-in-Wales.pdf Mair summarized the research for the group, which she stressed was not "deep and thorough", but intended to provide a starting point and contextual overview. It reviews the available evidence on the main drivers of change – technology, demography, climate change, economic change – and their implications for the nature of work and working practices. It then considers the responses of employers and workers; and assesses the possible implications for policy makers and in particular the Welsh Government.

	The research links to the Welsh Government's programme on fair work, and the Taylor Review on fair work.

The national context is Wales' poor performance relative to the rest of the UK (even allowing for the London effect) in terms of labour market participation, productivity and increasing inequality, including intergenerational inequality. The country also has a huge skills mismatch.

Other research that Mair highlighted:

- Work by NESTA on the role of creativity in future jobs. This links to OECD work to develop a measure for development of creativity in schools, which will form part of the next round of PISA tests.
- Prof Phil Brown on digital technology and job matching.
- Resolution Foundation reports |
| **2. Impact dialogue: What impact? On whom? What questions arise?** | Key points / questions raised:

- The focus of the research is on the next 30 years at most, as anything beyond this is felt to be too speculative. Given the pace of change, even 30 years has an element of "crystal ball gazing".

- The research identified evidence gaps in relation to labour market trends.

- Choice and inequality are variable in relation to flexible working. Two-way flexibility is often lacking, with risk borne disproportionately by the individual.

- The labour market is being "hollowed out" with the erosion of middle-level jobs, which are critical for providing opportunities for progression. |

	- What is the political will to tackle unfairness in the labour market? - Do leaders and managers in employing organisations understand how businesses and other employers need to change to respond fairly to changing context? Almost certainly not – there is a huge L&M skills issue to be tackled. - Creativity has been identified as a key skill for the future world of work. What are the competencies required in the learning and skills sector to enable it to facilitate the development of creativity? How can the development of creativity be embedded into other subjects, including English and Maths? (Donaldson review) What teaching approaches foster creativity? - There's a challenge to shift thinking away from a focus on qualifications as the measure of outcomes, but It is difficult for qualifications to prepare people for jobs that do not yet exist (or haven't even been anticipated). - CIAG has a huge role to play in encouraging / enabling people to consider changing jobs, particularly in the context of labour market uncertainty / anxiety. Mid-life career review model provides an approach which embeds IAG into work and wider life, and could be revisited / extended. Vital role for trusted intermediaries, who may not be in education and skills sector. Development of diverse entry points back into learning and retraining are key. - The lifelong learning sector needs to be more proactive and assertive about presenting evidence to policy makers regarding "what works.". Research / measurement issues: - Better evidence is needed on how to foster progression from low paid, low skill jobs –

	What works in terms of approaches, structures, etc? . • Need better metrics to measure fairness and quality of work. Access to training, right to request time off to learn, and support for non-work related learning were suggested by the group as possible elements of a skills-related metric, and it was proposed that this be put into Welsh Gov't consultation on fair work. Also suggested that businesses' demonstrating these features should be a condition for their being able to access certain benefits (e.g. through tax system). But it was also recognised that it is easier for large corporations to get on board than for small and micro businesses.
3. Links with Work Packages	**WP2: Citizens' Curriculum Vocational Plug-in** Should CC model encompass creativity as a key skill / capability? If so, how?
	WP3: Family Learning – Wider Outcomes
	WP4: Sector Focus What can we learn from the WP about developing progression routes from low paid, low skilled roles? What are the labour market structures in the sectors under review, and what are the stepping stones from low paid roles? What is the extent of skills mismatch? How does / should CIAG fit in?
	WP5: Excluded Groups Similar to WP4 – but perhaps also need to understand more about what the scope is for individual agency / action in the face of structural forces. It's relatively easy for policy to target individuals and their supposed deficiencies (e.g. lack of skills or the right skills), but there are arguably bigger issues around e.g. skills utlisation, low productivity which are due to weak business practices.

	WP6: Joint Practice Development
	Workforce skills to foster creativity and embed this across curriculum areas.
	Understanding and responding to individuals changing expectations of how they will learn, e.g. as a result of technological change. Is the workforce keeping up?
	Dave H keen to get JPD on future IF agenda to look at such issues.
4. Linkages with National Coordinators cluster theme *Basic Skills Stakeholder Coordination*	
5. Areas for further investigation/action	
6. On-going impact evidence and activities	