

Briefing Paper: Innovations in Information Advice and Guidance (IAG)

University of Nottingham Centre for International ePortfolio Development
www.nottingham.ac.uk/eportfolio

Value-added, cost effective and personalised Information Advice and Guidance can be provided dynamically through shared services utilising the latest developments in open standards, data and web technologies.

Background

UK Education institutions, support services and students are facing significant financial and cultural challenges. Despite these, it remains critical that the UK produces world class, highly skilled employees to underpin the economy. It is ever more important that the best IAG possible is available for individuals to make informed choices. Information about course offerings and progression together with peripheral data about the labour market, transport, location, finance, must be current, accurate and coherent.

Opportunity

There is a real opportunity to implement a step-change development in IT infrastructure, to provide an ecosystem of services to support IAG.

The educational landscape is changing rapidly. Expectations of ‘more for less’ alongside increased value from IAG services creates a challenge. Shared IT services will help meet the needs of individuals, careers professionals and curriculum planners, providing the information element and enabling them to concentrate on offering quality one-to-one guidance.

Using new technologies to join and choreograph data enables the development of lightweight and affordable online services for IAG stakeholders. This is a move away from resource-heavy ‘one stop shops’ towards dynamic and personalised services.

About the Centre for International ePortfolio Development (CIePD)

Since 2005, the University of Nottingham’s Centre for International ePortfolio Development¹ (CIePD) have undertaken pioneering work in the East Midlands region in partnership with Connexions services, Lifelong Learning Networks, employers, regional planners, HE, FE and schools. We have introduced open standards and distributed web services to these partners and effected change in practice and outlook.

¹ CIePD website <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/eportfolio>

Our vision: An Ecosystem² of linked services

Implementing XCRI, the UK courses standard in the East Midlands

Readily available, accurate and consistent course information which can be aggregated, presented and combined in numerous ways sounds a long way off. However, the CIEPD have moved this vision into reality through promoting new technologies to key partners and providing practical IT expertise for implementation. XCRI³ (eXchanging Course Related Information) is the UK data standard describing course advertising information and is an important element of a service-based Ecosystem. The CIEPD have been instrumental in introducing and implementing XCRI into East Midlands' Connexions services, HE and FE, and have influenced national courses aggregators such as UCAS and Hotcourses in the process.⁴

Linking Labour Market data to provide personalised IAG services

Our JISC-funded SALAMI project⁵ is joining course and sector information using XCRI course data, public sources of Labour Market Information and open data to produce shared web services for individuals, IAG services and institutions. These new combinations and 'mashups' of IAG-related data are providing new, dynamic routes into intelligence thus empowering individuals, advisers and planners to explore and personalise the pathways into education and employment.

About us and our partners

- We are a University of Nottingham team in touch with national policy for learning, skills and employment, working closely to government standards for IT development.
- We have a wide network of working partnerships in the region: learning and training providers (HE, FE, employer), Connexions, Aimhigher, Area Prospectuses, Sector Skills, Apprenticeship service etc.
- All partners are enthusiastic to collaborate and work with us
- We are funded primarily by JISC, the EU, the University

Contact

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² We call our vision an 'Employability Ecosystem'. This describes the body of CIEPD's integrated web services work to support and enhance progression around the stages of the student-to-employment lifecycle for lifelong learning

³ eXchanging Course Related Information <http://www.xcri.co.uk>

⁴ CIEPD's XCRI projects <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/eportfolio/xcri/index.shtml>

⁵ SALAMI – Shared Aggregation of LABour Market Information <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/eportfolio/salami>

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