

Evaluation in the United Kingdom: An Update of Recent Activities

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The United Kingdom Evaluation Society (UKES) recently concluded its 11th Annual conference titled “Evaluation in an uncertain world: The role of evaluation in understanding and managing complex change” held December 1-2, 2005 in Manchester, England.

This year's UKES conference focused on methods, approaches, and uses of evaluation in the context of change at small group, organizational, national, and international policy levels. The conference incorporated eight themes including:

1. Evaluation in understanding and facilitating the change process.
2. Modeling or conceptualizing the change process and the role evaluation might play in it.
3. Evaluation and organizational development.
4. Evaluations of complex policy implementation.

5. The relationship between policy development and evaluation.
6. Evaluation in complex international environments.
7. Building multiple stakeholder participation into evaluation.
8. Evaluating partnership learning.

Keynote speakers for the event included Jane Davidson, Davidson Consulting Ltd. based in New Zealand; Norman Glass, CEO of the National Centre for Social Research; Anna Coote, Head of Engaging Patients and the Public at the Health Care Commission; and Nick Tilley, Professor of Sociology at Nottingham Trent University. A significant number of papers focused on policy development and evaluation with a similar number presenting “realistic” and capacity building evaluation approaches. A total of 30 sessions complemented the keynote addresses, plenary speakers, and special workshops held during the conference.

Each of the five regional evaluation networks within the UKES is planning for events to take place in 2006. At the time of this writing, no details were available for 2006 events. Information on these future events can be found online at http://www.evaluation.org.uk/Events/regional_networks.htm.

Work Opportunities in Evaluation in the UK

A search of job opportunities at the Guardian’s (<http://jobs.guardian.co.uk>) online classifieds using the term “evaluation” resulted in 127 listings with local and national government sectors garnering the largest number with just over 20 percent of the listings. Healthcare, social care and education sectors combined made up 53 percent of the 127 job openings listed. However, the postings included positions

that were not evaluation-specific, but included the term evaluation within the job description. When limiting the search to job openings with the term “evaluation” in the title, only four job openings were found.

Contributor’s Note

If you have additional information or corrections regarding any of the above mentioned items or if you would like to send contributions regarding evaluation activities in the United Kingdom, please feel free to contact me at wes.martz@wmich.edu.