

## **Learning to Change: ICT in Schools**

(Book review)

**Reviewer:**

**RG Baird**

Faculty of Arts  
University of Ulster  
United Kingdom  
[rg.baird@ulst.ac.uk](mailto:rg.baird@ulst.ac.uk)

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### **Literacy in a technical world?**

If you are reading this on the web, as I assume most of you are, then you are committed, committed to the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and its use in the educational environment. On the other hand you may in fact be one of the majority who accepts that the Technological express is coming your way but you are not so sure if (a) you want to get on. *or* (b) you are not all together happy with the route it is taking.

For a number of years my main teaching and research focus has been within the discipline of New Media, specifically its use to effectively communicate within education and training. I accept that 'it', New Media, is just the next stage in the advancement of communication technology that follows on naturally from Film, Radio, & Television. However it has brought about the requirement for a major paradigm shift in approach, application and concept if it is to deliver to its full potential, and there in lies the rub, we have the technology but we are not yet confident in its use.

Some years ago I was director of a research and development group dedicated to the use of ICT in higher education, most particularly my own university and at that time it was thought that all you had to do was put your notes on line. I well remember one of my colleagues saying that the students were here to learn and they would have to read the notes regardless or they would fail, it was as simple as that!. He had no concern for a redesign and application of the content, no interest in the delivery methods, in fact no interest in the pedagogy of the new delivery methods.

It would have been a great assistance to me, and those like me, if Learning to Change: ICT in Schools had been published then.

What we have in this CERI (Centre for Educational Research and Innovation) publication is the result of two years intensive looking at various national experiences in what it takes to deliver an ICT based quality learning experience. Sixteen member countries contributed to the final outcome and, very importantly, so did an international network of students organised by the OECD. The students, our end users, provided, "a refreshing and perceptive user-perspective".

I found the report honest and refreshing and believe it to be required reading for all education mangers and teacher training staff. Not much of what I read was new to those of us who have been in this field for any number of years, but it was refreshing to see it all together in black and white and in one official report.

The publication is honest and forthright in its conclusions. I was particularly impressed by its conclusions that ICT will not work without a radical rethink of teacher training and staff development, an old and very obvious problem which it is taking a long time for institutions and governments to address.

There are seven well considered chapters here, from Policy Priorities, through, Curriculum and the Learner, Educational Software and Digital Content, to Schools Organised for ICT and the Homes they Serve.

This is not just a book for Secondary and Primary education, it is required reading for all teachers and educationalists, mainly because it is short and precise, it is exactly what it sets out to be, a short easy reading hard hitting report of 118 pages, including the bibliography.

If you are serious about your teaching either as a director, manager, or 'chalk face' presenter you need to read this report so you can see in six easy chapters the overview of the new frontier. This is the kind of book which you can recommend to colleagues without the fear that it will be so full of jargon and 'tecki talk' that it will only feed their techno-phobia with regard to ICT. It is also a valuable handbook with regard to a ready reference overview of the 'big ICT picture'. It is the kind of book you want to quote from at those all too common faculty and board meetings where no one wants to listen to your pleading for staff development time, better considered equipment or where you want people to understand that digital literacy is more than an ability to use computers in simple ways. Buy this book for your vice chancellor and more importantly for your director of IT, they probably need it more than you.

The school environment has to be fully supportive of ICT, making available expert assistance and advice to the teacher in this rapidly changing field. New forms of curriculum and assessment are called for, new ways of organizing schools, if the dramatic educational potential of ICT is to be delivered and realized. Such a demanding "learning to change" agenda is the subject of this international report. It is illuminated by the views of individual students, who used ICT enthusiastically in their own learning, and shared their experiences in an Organization for Economic Co-operation and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) can impact student learning when teachers are digitally literate and understand how to integrate it into curriculum. Schools use a diverse set of ICT tools to communicate, create, disseminate, store, and manage information.(6) In some contexts, ICT has also become integral to the teaching-learning interaction, through such approaches as replacing chalkboards with interactive digital whiteboards, using students' own smartphones or other devices for learning during class time, and the "flipped classroom" model where students watch lectures at home.

I. INTRODUCTION In order to compete in the global competitive economic environment, a highly skilled and educated workforce with aptitude and skill in the application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is essential [1]. It is important that all sectors of the education understand the benefits of investing in ICT and the infrastructure that is required for introducing ICT. A probable reason why the other schools are not writing the IGCSE is the shortage of qualified ICT teachers in the schools. A study was done in 2012 with a sample of 42 schools that have ICT both in urban and rural.