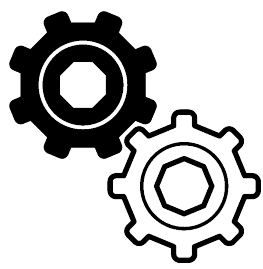


PESTLE TOOL



A PESTLE tool is used to analyse external factors that could impact an organisation. These include **political, economical, sociological, technological, legal and environmental factors** (Battista, 2024).

Organisations can use this tool to support decision making and to plan for the future by identifying external pressures. The tool has since evolved to include an 'E', known as STEEPLE, to analyse ethical factors as well (Taylor and Perkins, 2021).

This infographic will demonstrate the use of the PESTLE tool to analyse the technological and political factors impacting Bridgend College.

Technological Factors

Since the Covid-19 pandemic the use of digital technologies has evolved at a fast pace. The pandemic has accelerated the use of digital technologies for teaching and learning (Timotheou et al, 2023).

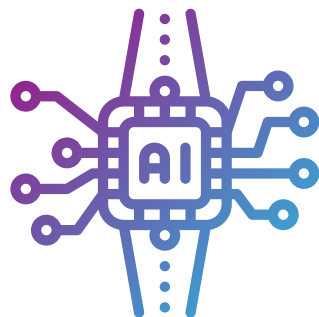
New tools and technologies such as generative artificial intelligence (AI) and mobile learning are creating an enhanced learning environment for learners. As Bridgend College is an educational institution in the Further Education (FE) sector, it has had to embrace these digital technologies quite quickly (Jisc, 2023). Bridgend College has developed an effective and ethical guide to AI to include what AI can be used for and what falls under learner malpractice (Bridgend College, 2024). Teaching staff need to be aware of the possibilities and the challenges associated with AI, which might create an upskilling need for some staff. This could impact on the workload of the HR and Learning and Development team (Jackson, 2024).

Workload remains to be a concern in the FE sector, with a Workforce Survey (EWC, 2023) finding that full time (37 hours per week) full time FE Lecturers worked on average 49 hours per week. It has also been raised as a concern by some in the Bridgend College internal 'just checking in' October 2024 survey. AI could help with reducing workload by supporting the creation of schemes of work or quizzes (Felix and Webb, 2024; Albadarin et al, 2024). However, as these should test learner knowledge and understanding, checking the accuracy of the information is still required (National Educational Union, 2024; Loos, Gröpler and Goudeau, 2023). It is recommended that a combination of AI and human approach is required to review and provide the best possible outputs (Biswas, Dobaria and Cohen, 2023).

Overall the development of digital technologies could be argued to have a positive impact with removing barriers to learning and creating a more collaborative learning environment for learners (Pearce, 2024; Albadarin et al, 2024). However, as almost half of Bridgend College learners live in areas classified as 'most deprived' (Buckley, 2024; Morgan, 2024), many learners could not have access to suitable devices, which is seen to be an issue across the FE sector (Jisc data analytics, 2024). Learners might also be at a disadvantage if newer versions of AI become available that require a fee (Webb, 2023).

Bridgend College needs to adapt with the developing technologies, to ensure that staff can provide a learning environment to enable students to

be all that they can be.



Political Factors

A significant amount of employment law is established through regulations legislated under Acts of Parliament (Taylor and Perkins, 2021). The UK Labour Government has recently announced their Employment Rights Bill as a part of their 'Make Work Pay' plan. These proposed changes include removal of the qualifying period of service for various rights including unfair dismissal, the right to statutory sick pay on day one of absence, and the introduction of the 'right to switch off' through a code of practice (CIPD, 2024).

The right to claim for unfair dismissal from day one will end the current two-year qualifying period (Acas, 2024) which was introduced by the Coalition Government in 2012. The Government at the time claimed that the two-year rule would save employers £6 million from unfair dismissal claims (Ewing and Hendy, 2012), however this didn't include the right to claim for automatically unfair dismissal. Automatically unfair dismissal includes dismissal for reasons such as pregnancy (Collins, 2022). The new Labour Government's intent is to strengthen employment rights (UK Government, 2024), suggesting a shift in focus, as Collins (2022) argues that unfair dismissal law currently favours employers.

The compensation available for successful unfair dismissal claims includes a basic award, calculated by a formula, and a compensatory award (Citizens Advice, 2021). An Employment Tribunal ordered Jaguar Land Rover to pay £147,000 to a former employee for unfair dismissal and discrimination (Downes, 2023) which shows the extent of the compensation that could be awarded if someone is not fairly dismissed.

The day one right might impact people managers' hiring decisions, as they might make them more cautious of hiring the wrong people (PM Editorial, 2024), which reinforces the importance of hiring the most suitable candidate aligned to the organisation's values.

The Labour Government also proposes to introduce statutory nine month probationary periods (CIPD, 2024) to be able to assess the suitability of the new starter for the role and where a 'lighter touch' process to fairly dismiss someone will apply (UK Government, 2024). Further detail on this process is required. This new statutory probationary period will impact management and business support staff which currently have six months probationary periods in the nationally agreed contracts in Wales.

The introduction of the day one right will impact the way that people managers at Bridgend College handle probationary periods, with them needing to provide significant more evidence of concerns during this period and what they have done to address this. This should also include the support provided to the new starter during a comprehensive induction period (Crossland, 2024).

This won't be coming into force until **2026** if it is passed (UK Government, 2024), however, it will impact the training and development that is needed for people managers in preparation for this change. It could be argued that it will also impact the level of HR support that people managers would need to keep them on top of the management of new employees.



If you would like further information, please get in touch with the HR team on ext 660