



National approaches to innovation: Robotics and the implications for work

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15:30 – 17:00 (coffee and tea at 15:15)

B4, Alliance Manchester Business School East

Abstract

The view that robots and artificial intelligence (RAI) are transforming work in unprecedented ways is attracting increasing attention, embodied in terms such as the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the Second Machine Age (Brynjolfsson and McAfee, 2014, Ford 2015). This seminar aims to contribute to debates about the extent of national differences in the diffusion of RAI and the way it is implemented and used within the workplace. It adopts an approach that considers the social and institutional complexity of ‘national systems’ of innovation (e.g. Freeman 1982, Lundvall 1999) and the role of institutions, the state and the social partners in shaping the diffusion of technologies. Taking Norway and the UK as examples of contrasting models of capitalism, the seminar uses key informant interviews to exam two main questions. First, are there national differences in the way that public policy and institutional arrangements are developing to support and shape innovation in RAI and its diffusion? Second, are there different expectations in relation to the pace of change, and the likely consequences for employment and skills? These questions feed into debates about what can be done to shape the way technology is used and how potential benefits are distributed.

About the Speaker

Caroline Lloyd is Professor at the School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University. Her research focuses on the relationship between product markets, labour markets, work organisation and skills. She has written widely on issues related to the political economy of skill and low wage work. She co-edited *Low-Wage Work in the United Kingdom* and recently published a comparative study of work organisation in the service sector; *Skills in the Age of Overqualification: Comparing Service Sector Work in Europe* (with J. Payne). She is currently working on a British Academy-funded project on the impact of robotics on work and skills in the UK and Norway.