

New Directions is a topical journal published by the Physical Sciences Centre in association with π CETL, The Physics Innovations Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

The journal is issued in paper and electronic formats once per year. It is intended for teachers, researchers, policy makers and other practitioners in physical sciences education.

An editorial board reviews all submissions.

The journal is free of charge to academics in UK higher education institutions. Subscriptions are available for those outside the UKHE sector who wish to receive the paper version. Contact the Centre for details.

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Editorial

The first issue of *New Directions* was issued in May 2003 and comprised 17 articles.

In this issue we present a series of 'reviews' of topics in physical sciences education and educational research written by 'expert' practitioners. The publication also includes 'communications' which arise from a general call for contributions from the physical sciences education community and invited reports from the funded projects working in the physical sciences education arena. In order to increase the provenance of the journal all submissions to *New Directions* are peer reviewed at both the initial and the final submission stages. Once again, the Editorial Team at the Physical Sciences Centre (Roger Gladwin, Tina Overton and Paul Chin) has been pleased to work with Derek Raine at Leicester University (now in association with π CETL, The Physics Innovations Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning) on this issue.

In this issue review articles provide comprehensive coverage of e-learning (including the use of e-voting systems and online learning), an overview of the situation with Outreach in the physical sciences plus the use of virtual learning systems and computer assisted assessment in student learning. We also have amongst the communications; subject specific topics (eg molecular modelling in chemistry), the application of context based learning in practicals and in groups plus the use of problem based learning in physics. For the development of skills there is coverage of an Adult Learners course in controversial aspects of science, a course designed to develop enterprise skills in students and a context-based system developing ideas in 'green' chemistry.

We hope that our reviews will keep readers updated on areas of broad interest and that some aspects of the work described in the communications is of use to you in your teaching. *New Directions* will now become a more regular publication and we hope that you will consider making a contribution to a future issue.

Editor

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