



Welcome to Volume 1, Issue 2 of the Journal of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (JLTHE).

In this period of continued change in Higher Education, and with particular reference to the UK, the emphasis on student access and success is greater than ever before. The newly constituted Office for Students promotes a 'vision for students and the sector: a system where every student, whatever their background, has a fulfilling experience of higher education that enriches their lives and careers.' (OfS, 2018). The marketization of HE, with 'so-called quality logics propel[ling] student satisfaction measurement mania in which scores are endlessly sought, captured, codified' (Nixon et al, 2018:929), is playing out across the sector. With this backdrop redefining the purposes of higher education, it is worth considering teaching and learning, and the interplay they have within the student experience. This issue of our journal takes on that task with a set of papers highlighting the transformational impact that developing critical thinking and reflective practices can have, both on students and on their tutors.

The 'reinterpretation piece' in this issue is a poem 'Cycle' by a second year University of Leicester student (**Adekoya**, this volume), expressing her new realisations and deeper understanding about learning and where this originated for her and how it stretches way beyond the delivered curriculum. This poem was inspired by **Rossana Deplano's** pilot study into using concept maps to address learner confusion with key concepts in Law, with the aim of facilitating more active engagement and achieve more meaningful outcomes for her students. Through her structured enquiry, Rossana has also come to realise her own responsibilities as a teacher in providing feedback and supporting group work. In a similar vein, but with a different facilitating method, **Mark Reichow** uses sketching as a 'tool of thought' to illustrate concepts in highly complex areas of Geology. Through his investigations into student performance in class and in exams, Reichow has developed greater awareness of the role of the tutor in active sketching classes and provides guidance in mediating these types of learning interventions. The third related article is from **Rosie Walker**, who deploys the 'threshold experience' of a student partnership conference to transform student understanding of the world around them. The learning gain from participation in the conference is captured in a structured reflective account, which consolidates in writing some of the emotional impact of the event, which Walker's research shows to be experienced by the students as empowering and suggests that it can be a bridge between a sense of compassion and meaningful action. Similarly, in the technical review by **Cheryl Hurkett** of the platform of our own journal, we hear about a different professional vehicle, this time a journal, not a conference, being used to develop undergraduate exposure to international peers. In Hurkett's example, the skills development is of science students experiencing writing, reviewing, revising and publishing.

More in the affective domain of learning, **Samantha Ahern** explores the 'duty of care' that Universities in the UK assume, and how learning analytics might assist personal tutors, or rather those staff assuming a pastoral (rather than an academic) advisory role, in performing a preventative rather than a reactive function with regard to mental ill-health of students. Ahern reports on some interventions that are becoming common now, arising from changes in behaviour observed through machine

interaction, and asks the question whether we are sensitive enough to ethical and racial imbalances in interpreting such data.

Staff partnerships with students and with each other are explored from three angles in the current issue: the political, the practical and the structural. The paper from **Jill LiBihan** at Sheffield Hallam with her counterparts **Tom Lowe** at Winchester and **Jenny Marie** at University College London, poses some significant challenges to student:staff partnership activity which have surfaced through the three-way comparison. LiBihan et al explore aspects of ownership, inclusivity and rewards for involvement in partnership, all of which threaten any such scheme from keeping to its original ethos. The clinical teaching fellow team paper by **Leahy et al** describes how students were consultant partners in the process of improving delivery of a programme, which also required the large teaching team to co-ordinate their efforts in offering multimodal revision sessions for Medical Students. Our structural contribution under the theme of partnership comes from **Andrew Kelly** at Edith Cowan University who has identified a working model to support co-teaching based on his experiences in delivering communication skills alongside a discipline specialist delivering content knowledge. Kelly emphasises through his model the importance of dialogue and mutual respect between the partners. He also brings us back to the starting point of this editorial with the weight he places on enforcing reflection and feedback across the teaching team as a means to strengthen the collective understanding of the purpose, and therefore what might define the success, of the teaching we are undertaking in higher education.

The production of our second issue has been another landmark moment for the editorial team as we take the innovations we reimagined for our journal into mainstream ways of thinking and working. We welcome your comments and contributions.

For this second issue, and on behalf of the editorial team, I wish you an enjoyable read.

Frances Deepwell,

Editor, Journal of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education

References

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