

Editorial

Welcome to this special edition of the journal. This editorial is divided into three sections. Section 1 introduces the papers derived from the Universities Association for Lifelong Learning (UALL) Work and Learning Network conferences held during 2017 and 2018. Section 2 includes two papers from the International Conference on Professional Doctorates, which took place in London on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018. The third section relates to the Dilemmas in Human Services conference, which took place on 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Three papers are represented from this event. The journal comprises both refereed and dialogue and debate articles. We hope that readers will find the papers selected for this edition both interesting and thought provoking and ultimately, of encouragement to participate in our research community, perhaps by contributing a paper for the next edition.

The contributions for this edition are outlined in the separate guest edited sections as follows:

1. The Universities Association for Lifelong Learning (UALL) Work and Learning Network annual conferences held during 2017 and 2018.

Guest Editors: Dr Elda Nikolou-Walker and Dr Paula Nottingham

It has been a real privilege to help with this special edition of the journal that has featured various papers from the Universities Association for Lifelong Learning (UALL) Work and Learning Network. The Network has been in its present form for the past five years and supports a wide variety of professional practice that features learning in the workplace.

Our annual conference is a time to present ongoing scholarship and research, network with colleagues, and to refresh and challenge our ideas as practitioners and researchers. A further paper Further papers included relates strongly to the journal's mission to disseminate current work and learning practice.

We are particularly pleased to be able to bring to your attention this issue, since 'work' and 'learning' have been given an increasingly, important status in higher education studies.

The June 2017 conference was held at Middlesex University in London with the theme 'Leading the Way: Shaping Practice in the Workplace and the Academy'. The June 2018 conference in Leuven, Belgium, in association with the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE) and BEEHiVES (Boosting European Exchange on Higher VET and Employer Involvement in Education Structures) centred on 'Creating Relevant Learning Experiences; employers' involvement with higher education'.

The selection of the papers presented in this guest edited section, both in the 'peer reviewed' and the 'dialogue and debate' parts, has covered a variety of topics ranging from the impact of work-based projects for employers and employees, the shaping of professional identity within work-based studies, the use of employability programmes promoting digital technology in Portugal, and the examination of the employer and work-based student perceptions of virtual laboratory teaching.

Papers also speak to challenging the concept of practice between work-based learning and the academy, and the critical value of reflective practice in transformational learning (i.e. Scottish Prison Service) and for professional doctoral education. Other contributions focus on moving ahead within higher education (including an example originating from America), through incorporating professional learning and education within hybrid models for global practice. The emphasis is always

on the learner being active in the workplace and the continuing role of organisations and professions in the pursuit of future planning. This issue also includes work on occupational health and physiotherapy practice and the function of frameworks for practice that continues the dialogue about professional education.

The local, national and international input of the conferences has made it clear that this practice is of significant global importance. We should, therefore, continue to encourage practitioners to compare lifelong learning practices with the rest of the world, aiming to provide a foundation for continuing our developments and aspirations.

The rich journal entries denote both synergy and challenging divergence, capable of both underpinning and informing future practice within the UALL Work and Learning Network and beyond.

We would, therefore, like to encourage involvement in future network and conference activities, as a way of sharing practitioner knowledge and collaborating in future research and scholarship that supports this area of expertise. Our network can be found on the UALL website

<https://www.uall.ac.uk/networks/work-and-learning>,

2. The 6<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Professional Doctorates: Professional Doctorates in a Changing Landscape, held on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018 at the Friends House, Central London.

Guest Editor: Gordon Weller.

Two dialogue and debate papers have emerged from this bi-annual conference, the next will be held in March 2020. The first article is by one of the conference keynote speakers, Professor Michael Tiraboschi, who discusses the emergence of the professional doctorate and the various forms that this can take, including the industrial and practice oriented variants which are emerging and the political and commercial potential for such doctorates. A further paper by Professor Abdalla Elbadri et al, considers the development of a new professional doctorate of pharmacy. Though many examples of pharmacy professional doctorates exist in the west, this is the first example from the developing world, from Khartoum University, Sudan. The authors are keen to make links with others involved in pharmacy professional doctorates.

Further information about this conference is available at: <http://www.ukcge.ac.uk/events/icpd2018-117.aspx>

3. The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Dilemmas for Human Services International Research Conference: Challenges, Strengths and Weaknesses in Organisations of Public Services. Faculty of Business and Law, University of Northampton UK and Luleå University of Technology, Sweden.

Guest Editor: Gordon Weller.

Three papers have been developed from presentations made at this conference. Firstly, the paper by Rebecka Näslund and Åsa Gardelli offers a meta-analysis of their research around involving adults with learning disabilities in their research, which was based upon production of an educational

video, which they were involved in producing. The paper provides important insights into the research arena involving those with disabilities the opportunity to be an equal research co-producer in the research, thus embodying ownership and participation and moving away from research done on them, towards researching with them. The second paper by Gail Milburn, Jordan Dolfi, Richard Parsons and Gordon

Weller considers the professional doctorate student and graduate experience. This research is based upon a narrative analysis of the reflective experience of three of the authors. What has emerged is a recognition that doctoral graduates have a desire to contribute and take responsibility within their community. The research initiative was started after all the authors met at a conference and decided to explore their doctoral learning experiences using a reflective narrative approach. The findings were presented at the Dilemmas conference and have formed the basis of a growing debate about the potential wider impact that professional doctorate graduates may have.

The third contribution is a dialogue and debate paper by Gordon Weller, which is related to the second paper by Milburn et al. The thinking from the paper by Milburn et al prompted the author to consider the professional doctorate in terms of the benefit that it may bring to wider society and specifically, how an ethical code for professional doctorate graduates could embody the often taken for granted values of those who hold a university doctoral award. The notion of the professional oath or pledge is examined in terms of historical background and how and why professional oaths and pledges have emerged and the potential for change. The paper concludes with a model professional doctorate pledge, which is intended to be of universal relevance to all doctoral graduates.

Overall, the editorial team have found it a refreshing experience to see papers emerging from a range of conferences focusing on so many aspects of work based learning. We would like to thank the authors presented in this edition for collectively providing stimulation for further research and development.

We hope that you'll enjoy reading this issue as much as we've enjoyed creating it!

Guest editor team:

Paula Nottingham

Elda Nikolou-Walker

Gordon Weller