

Editors' introduction

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We are pleased to present the inaugural issue of the Journal of Educational Innovation, Partnership and Change. Colleges and universities have long recognised that they need to improve their strategies and approaches to engaging students in authentic dialogue about their education experience and expectations of their institution. Recently, a strong body of work has been developing, concerning the role of technology and digital practice which must operate effectively in learning and work environments. Our first issue offers a fascinating insight into a range of current or very recent UK Higher Education staff-student partnership initiatives that transform both staff teaching methodology and student learning experiences. It shows practitioners (often teachers) and students working in partnership on digitally-related projects, and reflecting upon their changing relationship with each other as they develop a shared understanding of how the digital environment can better support the learning experience.

The 2014 NUS Report, *Radical Interventions in Teaching and Learning*, argues that, for universities to provide more inclusive learning environments,

'students must be empowered as active and participatory agents, not as mere consumers, so that they can articulate their own conceptions of what makes good learning environments and work in partnership with academics and administrators to realise these conceptions.'

The articles featured exemplify the diverse approaches that educational institutions are taking to address the call for inclusive learning. Our first issue considers the benefits of 'blogging to learn' to enable first-year undergraduates from non-traditional backgrounds to find their voice and overcome the barriers of academic writing conventions by working with student mentors following a second-year module; it contains an opinion piece which advocates empowerment of students in the assessment process by opening collaborative e-dialogue between staff and students about assignment briefs; it looks at a scheme for student-nominated awards for excellence in teaching which, through the celebration of staff expertise, identify those approaches most beneficial to student learning and encourage sharing of good practice; it reports on the collaboration between Welsh and Georgian institutions to survey the use of e-learning by staff and students and draw conclusions about how best to deploy Technology Enhanced Learning to enhance teaching methodology; it includes one case study on an institution's experience of coordinating an institutional bursary scheme for undergraduate students working in partnership with staff on pedagogic research and another on opening dialogue about teaching and learning between staff and student 'consultants'; in keeping with the notion of students as producers, it considers the value of appointing postgraduate students to work as teaching assistants to support students with online distance learning; it describes student partnership in developing an open educational resource to support undergraduates in identifying, evaluating and acquiring the digital literacies expected of employees in the working world; it offers more insights into the development of employability skills in students in the form of a case study outlining the progress of a student internship scheme designed to achieve an institution-wide

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collaboration; it charts the creation by a multi-disciplinary partnership of staff and students of a mobile recording app for collation of field data.

Such a rich vein of evidence of partnership and collaboration in bringing about change in both teaching and learning should have enormous potential: for those seeking to undertake similar projects in other institutions; for those committed to the re-direction of students to the role of producers rather than consumers in education, and for those who recognise that methods of harnessing advances in digital technology can be hugely beneficial to teachers and learners alike.

This journal is supported by the [Jisc Change Agents' Network](#) (CAN), which was established as a result of [Jisc projects](#) from 2010 onwards and recognised the role that student change agents played as key enablers of institutional change. The network actively supports students working in a variety of roles, as change agents, digital pioneers, student fellows and students working in partnership with staff on technology-related change projects. The journal exists to disseminate the learning from these projects more widely and to support other institutions in implementing staff-student partnerships. CAN is supported by the National Union of Students (NUS), The Student Engagement Partnership (TSEP), the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE), Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), Quality Assurance Agency, Scotland (QAA Scotland), the Higher Education Academy (HEA), the RAISE Network and Students as Partners Network (Wales).

The publication of this journal enables the Jisc Change Agents' Network actively to support the growing community of practice of students and staff working in partnership on technology-related innovation projects. The articles in this issue are testimony to the growing interest in this field and demonstrate an emerging and increasingly confident practice, providing ideas that we hope will inspire others. We hope you find the journal not only a valuable resource and reference point for stimulating discussion, but also a place that supports and promotes the research emerging from staff-student collaborative partnerships.

Reference list

NUS (2014) Radical Interventions in Teaching and Learning. Available at: <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/open/highereducation/Radical-Interventions-in-Teaching-and-Learning/> (Accessed: 23rd Feb 2015).