

Introduction to Gateway Papers

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A new focus on education in pedagogic research

Gateway Papers was originally launched in November 2010, after it emerged from the DMU Teacher Fellow work of Dr Will Curtis. At that time, it was a peer-reviewed journal for staff and students engaged in pedagogic research at DMU, with an interdisciplinary focus. One of its key aims was to celebrate scholarship around teaching excellence in the University, working across practitioners and students in a collaborative manner. In its first incarnation, Gateway Papers had a limited run and effectively closed when Will left the University.

However, with the development of DMU's Institute for Education Futures in 2017, and then the Centre for Academic Innovation in 2020, a new set of spaces for the dissemination of *both* education *and* pedagogic research opened up. One of these is a re-vamped Gateway Papers, which is a peer-reviewed journal that reflects critically on learning and teaching in the changing contexts of education. These contexts include, but are not limited to, higher education, colleges, prisons, community settings and schools. We are interested in nurturing work that is both critical in analysis and practitioner-focused, developmental and cooperative. Crucially, the journal celebrates an interdisciplinary scope.

The aims of Gateway Papers are fourfold.

1. To foster and support dialogue between members of the global, academic community (for instance academic staff and learning developers, UG and PGR students, and external project partners) engaged in pedagogic and education research in the full-range of settings for learning.
2. To act as a bridge between REF and TEF activities, by establishing a distinctive scholarship culture and sharing innovative practice.
3. To enable collaborative, interdisciplinary and cooperative pedagogic and education research.
4. To provide a stepping stone for further external publication at both national and international-levels.

In this re-issue

We have decided to re-launch Gateway Papers with the original five papers from Issue 1 of November 2010, with reflections on four of those papers from members of the new editorial board. The original papers focus upon student voice, feedback, education and technology, curriculum design for language learning, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. In the case of Bamkin's paper on language learning, we have provided no reflection given its specialised nature. However, in reflecting on the other four papers, it has become clear that issues which were live a decade ago, as the marketisation of the sector was taking root, have morphed but remained important.

Thus, reflecting on Esendal *et al's* work on student voice, and Dobbins' work on the scholarship of teaching and learning, highlights the tensions that exist between in-course

evaluation and the financialisation of performance data through external metrics like the National Student Survey (NSS) and Longitudinal Education Outcomes. This has ramifications for curriculum design, delivery and assessment, in relation to issues of teaching intensity and value-for-money, which are made concrete in English higher education, in the development of the Office for Students, the Higher Education and Research Act, and responses to the pandemic, like the Department for Education's higher education restructuring regime (for more detail, see, Hall, 2020).

Moreover, these tensions highlight how issues of competition between institutions, subjects and individuals, are recalibrating the relationship between students and their families, and practitioners. In both Dobbins and Coles' papers, reflections based on the ideas of students-as-consumer, students-as-purchaser and students-as-producer emerged, demonstrating the contested idea of the twenty-first-century learner. Here, there is an added complexity with recent work on students as partners and the focus on co-creation of the curriculum. However, a more radical reinterpretation of these relationships in light of the curriculum/pedagogy, is generated by the decolonising movement, which has a much richer focus on anti-oppressive practices and authenticity. For more detail on this, see the reference list in the Decolonising DMU ((DDMU), 2021) working position

In developing responses to these issues, Blair and McGinty question mechanisms through which feedback can be sensitive and constructive, in relation to a range of learner identities and social hierarchies. Moreover, they force us to question the role of mutuality and collectivism as prerequisites for authentic and meaningful formative peer-to-peer feedback, as a way of engaging with those identities and hierarchies. Inside a highly competitive culture that focuses on quantification, identification and prioritisation of individual attainment, the crucial role of dialogue demands a much broader discussion about the relationship between learning and assessment.

A new call for papers

As well as reissuing our original papers with reflections, we have an open call for papers based upon responses to the pandemic and its impact upon academic practices, identities, cultures and belonging. However, we would like to stress that these responses can be from students, professional services' staff, managers and academic staff, as we build a collective and communal understanding of the impacts of the pandemic. These impacts can be described and discussed in terms of emotion, ill-being and well-being, workload and working practices, cognition, cooperative working, lone working, the place of technology, and so on. We are also very interested in papers that develop our understanding of the differential, intersectional impacts of Covid-19. Our call is available here:

<https://gp.demontfortuniversitypress.org/announcement/>

If you would like to discuss a submission, please get in-touch:

<https://gp.demontfortuniversitypress.org/contact/>

If you would like to become an author, please submit at:

<https://gp.demontfortuniversitypress.org/author/register/author/>

If you would like to become a reviewer, please create an account (including detailing your interests) at: <https://gp.demontfortuniversitypress.org/author/register/reviewer/>

if you are interested in guest editing a special collection, please get in-touch with more detail about the scope, potential themes or questions, and the timescale.

References

Decolonising DMU. 2021. "Decolonising DMU: A Working Position." *De Montfort University*. Accessed 7 January 2021. https://decolonisingdmu.our.dmu.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2020/01/Decolonising_DMU_position.20.01.20.pdf

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