

Editorial

This issue of Practitioner Research in Higher Education includes seven papers covering three related ways of learning. The first four papers focus on the learning power of feedback for students on taught programmes. The fifth paper investigates the professional learning power of practitioner research for teachers within postgraduate part-time study. The final two evaluation of practice papers offer examples of professional inquiry by university teachers.

The first paper, collaboratively authored by Kimberly Wilder-Davis, David Carless, Mark Huxham, Velda McCune, Joan McLatchie, Tansy Jessop and Hazel Marzetti, presents a critical review of theory and research on assessment feedback. The authors use a metaphor of moving from 'fast food' to a 'well-balanced' diet of student engagement with feedback. Positioning feedback to include 'responsive change' they emphasise the benefit of a programme level approach to feedback, to achieve coherence for students who are studying and being assessed on modules that may be experienced as isolated assessments. To achieve programme coherence, the authors suggest two initial steps. First, for tutors to know what is being taught in other modules, and second, for tutors to build meaningful working relationships with students, in other words to know them, not least in relation to the assessment feedback they have received. Beyond this, and informed by the research base, the paper sets out a list of practical actions to maximise the learning power of feedback by making it more coherent for students across their programme.

The second paper, by Tom O'Mahony, examines, using quantitative methods, the academic workload implications of moving from a traditional end of module assessment to a multi-stage design that maximises the learning power of formative assessment and feedback. It is not a spoiler to reveal the killer statistic, the study found the multi-stage formative assessment design included a 23% additional workload, measured by time, for the tutor. It is important to read the paper, which does not make huge claims to generalisation but does provoke some critical thinking around design for formative assessment and feedback. A key suggestion is the need to strongly develop peer assessment as part of the shift to multi-stage formative designs. The third paper, by David Thompson and Nicky Meer, contributes to this development of feedback from multiple sources by blurring the boundaries between formative and summative assessment. In the field of Filmmaking the study investigates how the 'crit', widely used as formative assessment in the arts and consisting of tutors and students viewing and responding with feedback on their own and each other's work, might be adjusted to become more summative. The authors argue that this helped the feedback to become more useful to students in terms of shaping their future work. The fourth paper, by Corey Kai Nelson Schultz, also focuses on the 'crit' but this time evaluates how it might be reconstructed to become part of formative peer assessment in the humanities. This study highlighted the emotional dimension of peer and formative assessment and considers how this might be managed by tutors.

In the engaging fifth paper Lisa Maurice-Takerei presents a case-study of mid-career schoolteachers, in Aotearoa / New Zealand, learning from engagement in practitioner research as part of their Masters level part-time studies. The professional learning power of practitioner research is a principle that underpins our PRHE journal, and this study found that as well as contributing to professional knowledge the teachers, through their research, 'engaged with their communities, deepened their

commitment and reconnected themselves to their work'. The sixth paper, by Hilda Mulrooney, is a critical evaluation of practice, focused on building relationships and sense of belonging in a higher education institution by sharing recipes and related stories. The seventh paper, by Lewis Baker, is another example of critical evaluation of practice, a self-study focused on individual professional learning through discourse analysis of teaching philosophy statements that the author had written at different stages of their development as a teacher.

From different perspectives and varying contexts, the papers in this issue provide insight into the learning power of feedback and of professional research.

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