

## Editorial

*John Butcher*

I am delighted to welcome readers to the third edition of *Enhancing the Learner Experience in Higher Education* (ELEHE), published as an open access journal by the University of Northampton. This special issue presents seven articles which were prepared by participants on a ground-breaking postgraduate course run by the University of Northampton for university staff across the UK who work with international students, including support staff, international office staff, and academic staff. The articles presented in this issue of the journal were originally produced as the final assessment on the Postgraduate Certificate in Enhancing the International Student Experience course. As such, participants were required to outline amendments to their professional practice which incorporated the aims and intended outcomes of the course. Hence each of these articles represents reflective work in progress, contextualised in relation to their own roles, their own institutions and issues identified in the literature. I am pleased that Dr Dave Burnapp, the course leader who instigated the idea, has contributed an Introduction which contextualises the significance of the internationalisation agenda in HE, and an overview of each of the articles.

The course itself, and this special edition of the journal, complement the University of Northampton's fourth Learning and Teaching conference *Learning Global*, which addressed the importance of internationalisation for universities, and in particular for learners in HE, and itself featured a pre-conference 'Strategic Implications of Internationalising HE' event showcasing a research project funded by the Higher Education Academy. The contemporary relevance of the internationalisation theme can be judged from the global attendees at the conference (including colleagues from Russia, China, Australia, the US and Nigeria) and the lively interest in issues around employability and assessment for international students, the role of technology in enhancing the international learner experience, and the challenge of transnational learning opportunities.

Importantly, the conference papers presented at *Learning Global*, and the articles included in this edition of ELEHE, offer a critical exploration of issues related to internationalising the curriculum, supporting international students and developing transnational learning partnerships. They all signpost the challenges faced by university staff and international learners in creating high quality student learning experiences. As such, they fulfil the original purpose of ELEHE, highlighted in my first editorial, to engage with the learner voice and use it to provide a research-informed critique of contemporary debates in HE.

So, congratulations to this sample of course participants who have become authors of journal articles – their persistence in adapting a piece of assessed work for publication offers another example of engagement with the student voice in enhancing the learner experience.

I am grateful, as ever, to the anonymous reviewers (drawn from the journal's international editorial board and institutional advisory board) who diligently read and offered advice on each of the original articles.