

Welcome to the seventh edition of *Compass*, the University of Greenwich's learning and teaching journal. This edition marks a significant development in the journal's evolution as it is our first fully online publication. We believe that our online journal will be not only more environmentally friendly, but also more readable, more accessible, and more visible to the higher education learning and teaching community. It is through the hard work of Gillian Keyms, Simon Walker and Jad Orlinska that this online plan for *Compass* has come to fruition.

This edition brings together opinion pieces and case studies based on presentations and workshops delivered at the University of Greenwich's 2012 summer conferences. The conferences offered colleagues from inside and outside the University an opportunity to discuss and debate learning and teaching issues. We see this edition of the journal as a means of taking those discussions forwards.

The fifth annual learning and teaching conference, SHIFT, took place on 3 July 2012. It was entitled *Inspiring Teachers: Learning and Leading in Academic Practice*. The conference began with a master class in threshold concepts by Professor Ray Land from Durham University, which developed ideas seeded during his keynote in the 2011 learning and teaching conference. The conference closed with a dynamic (late night for the presenter) video conference keynote from Andrew Douch, a practising teacher from Australia, who won the Microsoft Worldwide Innovative Teacher award in 2008. Six papers in this edition come from the SHIFT conference.

- Patrick Ainley's (School of Education) Opinion Piece offers a critical review of Stefan Collini's recent book *What are Universities For ?* Patrick argues that education is never for its own sake – it is much more important than that.
- While Patrick provided a book review (note future editions of *Compass* will have a separate book review section), Noel-Ann Bradshaw (School of Computing and Mathematical Science) and Karen Richardson (IT and Library Services)'s Case Study shows how a book review assignment encouraged mathematics students to read more.
- My own Opinion Piece (Karen Smith, Educational Development Unit) shows how my experience of presenting at the SHIFT conference in the novel Pecha Kucha format led me to introduce a Pecha Kucha assignment into the University of Greenwich's Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education.
- Muhammad Ali Imran (University of Surrey) and Kamrad Arshad (School of Engineering)'s Case Study also describes the introduction of innovative learning approaches. They outline the use of flipped classroom and just-in-time teaching techniques to enhance learning amongst postgraduate engineering students.
- Jane Stokes (School of Health and Social Care) and Keena Cummins (independent speech and language therapist) share their experiences of using videos with speech therapy students in order to enhance their students' reflective practice and subsequent professional development.

- Finally, Ray Stoneham and Matt Pritchard (School of Computing and Mathematical Sciences) ask through their Opinion Piece whether students actually read or access online feedback. They offer areas for future research and development.

The tenth e-learning conference, APT, took place on 4 July 2012. It was entitled *Employer Engagement in a Digital Age* and it welcomed delegates from across the UK. It was opened with a keynote by education consultant Marcus Orlovksy and closed with a panel discussion around the theme: 'in a digital age, how and what should universities be teaching'. Four papers from this conference appear in this edition.

- Within their Opinion Piece, Sheila McNeill (JISC) and Bill Johnston (Strathclyde University) propose a framework for the strategic development of a digital university within the modern age. They map ideas for Greenwich Connect initiative to the framework.
- Linda Bennett (Gold Leaf Consultancy)'s Case Study reports on the introduction of electronic textbooks at the University of Plymouth, offering staff and student views of working with electronic resources as part of a first year Psychology programme.
- Julie Laxton (University of Leeds), Paul Dagg, Janet Hargreaves, Duane Laverick, and Carrie Mitchell (University of Huddersfield) provide a Case Study that describes a collaborative project between staff and students to develop a freely available self-assessment tool to rate students' preparedness to enter professional practice.
- Ian Carruthers-Jones (Business School) describes the introduction of a mobile-device-enabled (iPAD) blended learning environment to support part-time professional postgraduate students on a Human Resource Management programme. The intervention had a positive impact on student learning.

The articles in this edition of *Compass* cover a range of learning, teaching and assessment issues. Hopefully, there will be something of interest to all readers. We hope to see you at the 2013 conferences. The APT conference, *Next Generation Learning Spaces and Work Places*, will take place on 2 July 2013 (<http://tinyurl.com/apt2013>). The SHIFT conference, *Sharing Practice, Developing Community*, will take place on 3 July 2013 (<http://tinyurl.com/shift2013>).

Dr Karen Smith, Managing Editor