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# Editors' Introduction

The scholarship of inclusion in higher education informs and permeates the range of papers, case studies and reviews in this issue of LATHE.

Explicitly and implicitly, contributors indicate an imperative to move from rhetoric about inclusion towards effective strategies for implementation; they also advocate the need to further advance our understanding by subjecting 'inclusion' to ongoing theoretical analysis, critique and evaluation. Such examination is particularly required in the case of 'commonly held' categories and concepts which shape and inform the scholarship of inclusion. As Jan Noyes observed in her review of Thomas & Quinn's international study of 'First Generation Entry into Higher Education' the very term 'first generation' is problematic. Mona El-Ayoubi emphasises that for 'inclusive approaches to be explored practically, it is important to rethink traditional interpretations of identity and consider identity as fluid and changing'. The dynamic aspect of inclusion is highlighted by Val Chapman in her rigorous exposition of equality legislation and its relation to education: 'the truly 'inclusive approach' focuses on flexibility'.

In discussions of inclusion questions of clarity and transparency of intellectual and educational purposes are considered by contributors. Chanock, for instance, in her paper questioning reliance on written assessments in the humanities, argues that concerns about deploying a range of alternative assessments 'might be countered by making these purposes more explicit so that students can more readily fulfil them'.

The necessity for effective staff and educational development is addressed by a number of contributors. Alan Hurst poses pertinent questions about staff development and illustrates ways of addressing them; Val Chapman presents an extensive range of case studies and questions for consideration; and Judith Waterfield & Bob West highlight inclusive approaches to curriculum design. In presenting a study of how staff from a university's partner organisation are supported, Martin & Barlow raise the important issue of ensuring that staff and educational development is, itself, inclusive.

Paramount in the work of the scholarship of inclusion in higher education is that the voices and experiences of hitherto marginalised

underrepresented groups and individuals are heard and that they have the opportunity to contribute to knowledge construction and pedagogy for effective inclusion.

Reflecting on an initiative in her college to make theatre education inclusive, Kathy Dacre refers to 'ripples' maybe going on to 'make waves' in the theatre industry; an apt metaphor to stimulate and sustain further development of the scholarship of inclusion in higher education.

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