

Transformations in Tertiary Education

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Andrea Chester · Catherine Hall-van den Elsen ·
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Editors

Transformations in Tertiary Education

The Scholarship of Engagement at RMIT
University

 Springer

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Preface

It is my pleasure to write this foreword for what I believe is an exciting volume filled with cases of how our educational practitioners go about scholarly practice at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT University).

Transformations in Tertiary Education: the scholarship of engagement at RMIT University showcases a range of practices that were explored at the RMIT Learning and Teaching conference, held in Melbourne on October 16–17, 2018. This annual conference brings together a community of scholars, practitioners and sector innovators, who actively contribute their ideas, enthusiasm and passion to support RMIT’s journey towards scholarship and the promotion of remarkable, contemporary learning experiences for our students. This collection is the result of an enthusiasm by the conference participants to submit their work for peer review and to make their practice more available to a wider community.

Working in a large and complex educational institution, RMIT staff have the responsibility of facilitating transformational experiences for over 80,000 students globally, across vocational and higher education sectors, preparing them for life and work. Our graduates need to be able to meet the challenges presented by rapid and radical shifts in the work they do; where and how they work; the skills and competencies they need and the industries and markets to which they contribute. The responsibility to be active contributors in a dynamic and complex world is vast.

As the demands upon graduates become more complex, so too do the challenges faced by academics and teachers. The 2018 conference streams reflected these challenges, providing a rare opportunity for participants and presenters to network and reflect around scholarship and innovative teaching and learning in a global tertiary education setting. The chapter authors from RMIT Australia and our offshore campuses in Vietnam address compelling questions related to curriculum, technology, assessment, and work-readiness and interrogate them from twenty-first-century global perspectives.

This book is designed by RMIT’s (FOR) 1300 Club for dissemination to an audience beyond the university. It presents innovative ideas about new directions in tertiary education, representing the breadth and depth of teaching and learning at RMIT. All chapter submissions underwent a double-blind peer review process, and

it is with pride that I present the works here in three discrete sections. In each section, the authors have demonstrated how they develop and sustain practice around the three focus areas. In *Engaging for Belonging*, six chapters examine transformative student experiences that address how we create remarkable student learning experiences, underwritten by scholarship and evidence. In *Engaging for a Global Outlook*, six chapters showcase examples of a focus on expanding our global networks through curriculum and extracurricular activities that develop intercultural awareness and competence and in *Engaging for Life and Work*, five chapters discuss innovative curricula and assessments that ensure that every one of our students leaves RMIT with skills that can be applied to changing workforce needs.

Scholars and practitioners will find that this volume focusses on the complex interrelationships between scholarship and practice, innovative learning design and learning outcomes and the shifting scholarship roles of the institution, the teacher and the learner. This book value-adds to both national and international perspectives on scholarship, promoting new interest in changing approaches to learning and teaching across the tertiary sector.

I do hope you enjoy reading and disseminating this work to your colleagues and friends.

Melbourne, Australia

Professor Belinda Tynan
Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President
RMIT University

Acknowledgements

In 2018, RMIT University hosted one of the largest annual learning and teaching conferences in its history. Six conference streams covered the university's strategic focus areas, and each stream saw academics, teachers and invited guests presenting in various types of sessions. More than 600 participants had the opportunity to hear about their peers' great teaching practices across a range of academic disciplines.

RMIT's 1300 Club was actively involved in the conference, and after the conference, club members realized that contributors had provided valuable snapshots of innovative teaching practice. The 1300 Club developed an ambitious plan to publish an edited volume to showcase current endeavours dedicated to the scholarship of learning and teaching at RMIT University.

With the support of Professor Belinda Tynan, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Professor Sherman Young, Associate Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Professor Andrea Chester, Dean, School of Education, the 1300 Club is pleased to present this book on the anniversary of the 2018 conference.

The editors especially thank the academics who gave their time to participate in the double-blind peer review process. Their thoughtful and constructive contributions helped the authors to refine their chapters:

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About the Editors

Professor Belinda Tynan is the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), RMIT University. Professor Tynan has responsibility for the quality and overall design of academic programs, student administration and services, academic performance (including promotion); updating of the teaching pedagogy, delivery mechanisms and learning resources; and student access and equity. Her research is within the field of online and digital education with a keen interest in ‘openness’, staff workload and more recently learning analytics. Prof. Tynan has worked across a range of education sectors for 30 years in Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and the UK. As a member of the Vice-Chancellor’s Executive at RMIT, she actively contributes to RMIT strategic planning, in particular, education and student services.

Tricia McLaughlin is a nationally recognized scholar in the area of lifelong learning. Tricia has extensive experience in the development of lifelong learning principles and their application in workplaces, educational settings and schools. The primary focus of her work is around learning and teaching models; and the evaluation of impact, particularly in the teaching of STEM. Tricia has authored and edited 5 books and numerous publications in learning and teaching and her discipline of construction.

Professor Andrea Chester is currently the Dean, School of Education at RMIT University. An accomplished senior academic and executive with 20+ years’ experience in tertiary education, Andrea has led learning and teaching innovation at local and national levels. She has particular expertise in the development of partnerships to enhance learning, with experience in co-design and mentoring models. Andrea is a member of the Australian Council of Deans of Education and has been recognized nationally for her teaching excellence. She is the author of more than 100 publications, reports and conferences papers.

Dr. Cathy Hall-van den Elsen has extensive experience in tertiary learning and teaching. The primary focus of her work has been around developing models and professional development for transnational learning and teaching and addressing the

challenges and opportunities for academic and teaching staff moving from traditional classrooms to ‘new-generation’ learning spaces. Cathy has participated in national projects associated with professional development for transnational teaching teams and the assurance of learning in higher education. Cathy convened RMIT University’s 2018 learning and teaching conference, Transformations in Tertiary Education.

Dr. Belinda Kennedy is an academic in the School of Education and in the College of Science, Engineering and Health at RMIT University. Belinda has broad experience in STEM disciplines, in particular, science and has initiated a number of STEM learning approaches for on-campus and off-campus programs for students at all year levels.