

## Why those of us who care about learning teaching and assessment must write!

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This is the final edited edition of the respected and impactful journal AISHE-J to be edited by the redoubtable Saranne Magennis. For me, this journal is an invaluable means by which I and like-minded colleagues can share project outcomes, good ideas and emergent learning with the wider Irish community in a spirit of cooperation and mutual engagement.

In recent years there has been less funding made available for teaching and learning projects in Ireland, the UK and indeed globally than there was in the 'golden age' when Saranne started her stint as editor, and that makes it even more important that we strive to build learning communities through our shared academic practices.

It is all too easy for us sometimes-embattled and always time-poor academics, educational developers and learning developers to hunker down in our bunkers, getting on with the day jobs and keeping our heads down, but it really matters that we make the time and not-inconsiderable effort to write in scholarly and reflective ways about our research, our projects and our day-to-day teaching and learning activities, so that we can share innovations and achievements across subject-boundaries, institutions and nations to our mutual benefit.

Of course, the path to publications is never a smooth one: rejections from journals are common and sometimes (even those of us who are experts in feedback and assessment) fail properly to read the detailed comments of reviewers who have worked hard to help us improve our work. I know I have: I failed to get a paper in a key journal early on in my academic career because I could only see the negativity in the comments. Subsequently I learned that the (so called) 'secrets' of successful publication include being quick off the mark to respond to editorial comments, having a thick enough skin to cope with robust critique, and the humility to learn from the shared expertise of others.

For me also, co-authoring has been crucial. I have learned so much over the years from the gurus with whom I wrote who kept my nose to the grindstone, expanded my repertoire of ideas, enabled me to recognise that multiple perspectives exist on any topic, and helped me recognise my own strengths as well as to lose some of my bad habits (sloppy referncing, poor layout, ill-thought through ideas, all of which make work less attractive to editors and reviewers. Having had a lot of help along the way in the early stages, I have subsequently written and edited with many novices as a means of paying forward the help I had, and this has paid dividends. It's a bit like being a proud parent, watching your progeny grow and thrive to a point where they no longer need help. This is another form of CPD for me, learning from less- as well as more experienced co-authors, who keep me on my toes and introduce me to current trends and topics

Through our work, those of us who write about learning and teaching can collectively be proud that our understanding of what works in assessment, in the classroom and the virtual environment has been expanded and extended through our systematic reviews and collective debates. Central to our work is foregrounding the enhancement of the student experience, redressing diversity and enabling each student to achieve her/his personal best. Teaching doesn't happen unless learners learn, and unless teachers adopt a restless approach to continuously updating and improving what we do, genuine learning is unlikely to happen. I salute the work of the journal in championing this approach, and I salute particularly today the work of Saranne for her endless and unfailing enthusiasm, erudition and energy. Moira Maguire now takes up the role of editor. Moira, you have a hard act to follow, but I am sure you will be up to it.