

Foreword

It is a great pleasure to write the foreword to this highly relevant and informative book *Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: Perspectives from a Business School*. It has been written at a time when stakeholders (including students, governments, employers, parents) are seeking greater accountability in the delivery of higher education, quality in the student learning experience, work readiness and employability skills development, and learning outcomes that equip students for successful lifelong learning. This book, expertly collated in targeted learning and teaching sections by the editors Kathy Daniels, Caroline Elliott, Simon Finley and Colin Chapman, captures a range of topics that are key to enhancing the quality of learning and teaching in higher education.

The 32 chapters, written with passionate commitment by teaching staff at the Aston Business School, highlight theoretical foundations of learning and teaching that inform good practice; identify strategies for engaging students in their learning, both within and outside the classroom context; suggest initiatives and innovations to enhance teaching practice; outline practices that facilitate learning in small and large groups, as well as creating communities of learners; and discuss the challenges and rewards of sound assessment measures in teaching and learning. The chapters on technology-enhanced learning are most informative in that they provide insights into the effectiveness of learning through technology, including online learning, blended learning and virtual classrooms, accompanied by tips for implementation of these approaches that we can all learn from!

The inclusion of ‘creativity’ in the Business curriculum; the building of knowledge and engaging students through storytelling; the focus on interactive teaching methodologies such as experiential learning, role play and simulation; and the use of problem-based learning and case studies, are indicative of approaches to teaching that seek to make student learning an enjoyable experience! The inclusion of teaching tips throughout these and other chapters provide encouragement and support for those teaching staff members who are yet to adopt such approaches or may be new to teaching in the higher education sector.

Of importance, too, are the chapters that focus on the challenges of

teaching to the diversity of the student population in today's classrooms – students who come from diverse backgrounds with differing learning styles, a range of prior learning experiences, and varying levels of English language competence. The strategies for inclusive teaching and for supporting the learning experience of these students are clearly defined and demonstrate the benefits. All students will find the chapters with suggestions for developing 'work readiness' and employability skills a useful source of information.

There are many books written on learning and teaching and approaches in education that are deemed to be good practice. This book, however, is unique in that it goes beyond the inclusion of just traditional topics in learning and teaching, with a value-added feature of 'Thoughts' which accompany many of chapters. These comprise additional ideas for consideration, additional critical incidents set in Business contexts, and challenging viewpoints for reflection.

This important book is a collection of topics in learning and teaching in higher education, intended for the Business Education context, but it has wider relevance and appeal to all educators and teachers across the disciplines. Although written and edited by experienced and dedicated teachers in the UK, the book and its rich content have equal relevance to educators across the globe, where the trends and issues in higher education are similar. All will benefit from the excellent ideas, the sound advice, the reflections on learning and teaching in higher education, and the Business School perspectives.

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