

**Foregrounding the importance of communication, collaboration,
and an open mind**

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Abstract

This editorial introduces the articles published in the 2022 edition of the journal, *Advancing Scholarship and Research in Higher Education*. The journal's editors reflect on the journal operations and on publishing in higher education in times of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Editorial

At ASHRE we publish progressively as each article passes through our review and editing processes. The time between approval and publishing is a matter of days which allows us, as on this occasion, to bookend an edition by commenting on articles already published. As a young journal, we are proud of the high quality of the articles entrusted to us for review and publication and thank the authors for choosing ASRHE. The articles published in this issue contain strong messages that align well with our journal's ethos of striving for research-based improvement in teaching and learning in

higher education while foregrounding the importance of communication, collaboration, and an open mind.

Liu's article, 'Beyond technology use: A people-centred approach to reconceptualising the adoption of learning technologies', is set at a New Zealand university. The research focusses on the human experience in learning management system adoption and advocates for shifting from a technology-centric or 'adoption-as-use' approach to a people-centred or 'adoption-as-process' one. Liu argues that adoption-as-process does justice to the role of teachers and their teaching practice, as well as respecting the emotions attached to experiences inherent in a transition between technology systems. Considering the dominance of negative emotions expressed by study participants, a change of focus in adoption approaches might be highly desired. While Liu's research took place before the COVID-19 pandemic, the challenges related to technology adoptions might have been amplified due to transitions in extremely short timeframes, warranting further research in this area.

Abel et al. have contributed the article 'A case study in the implementation of convergent education: Diversifying frames of knowledge'. The research centres on the teaching of a course titled 'Imagining our Futures: Sense Making in the Light of COVID-19, Black Lives Matter, and Climate Change', delivered at a US university. The course is designed to connect three contemporary challenges of global importance which also have specific significance to the region in which the university is located. The researchers introduce a framework for convergent education that emphasises collaboration across disciplines with a focus on shared learning and the development of problem-solving skills. The motivation is to bring students and staff from STEM and non-STEM areas together to build capacity for solving the complex needs our world's societies face.

The research leading to Clark's article, 'How can critical thinking be recognised and developed in students that are still developing tertiary-level English language proficiency?', is situated in Australia. Clark's findings show that international students possess well-developed critical thinking skills, despite at times not being able to express their thoughts with the language fluency of native speakers. She challenges us to look beyond English language proficiency and calls for the use of alternate methods in teaching and assessment. As numbers of international students at Australian universities are on the increase again in post COVID-19 times, Clark

encourages us to truly welcome the rich and diverse view those students bring to our education systems.

Like others in the sector, our team at ASRHE has experienced the pressures of coping with COVID-19 and its implications for workloads and well-being. Long-standing issues in the higher education sector, such as finding time for scholarly work and research, have been amplified. Yet, more than ever, we emphasise the value of critical reflection and research on our professional practice, to address the many challenges higher education faces and to counterbalance with evidence-based scholarship tendencies to rush through changes without rigorous and systematic exploration. We therefore encourage authors to continue to share their ideas with the academic public, so that other people in similar positions might benefit from the systematically evaluated wisdom.

References

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