

Editorial: Volume 7 No 1

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In this edition there are six papers, a research note and a teaching note, covering a wide range of issues.

No edition of *IJME* would be complete without a paper that discusses the impact of new technology in some form. In the first paper, Mark Burridge and Hülya Öztel investigate the relationship between student achievement and e-learning on an undergraduate strategic management module. While little effect on the discursive element of assessments are reported, there does appear to be some benefit from the use of online practice multiple choice examinations, with frequency of use associated with higher exam marks.

The second paper, from Alan Reeves and Russell Rimmer, is an attempt to explain academic performance on an MBA programme using new independent variables obtained from the careful scrutiny of application data. By exploring the motivation of MBA students to join the programme and combining this with other non-academic variables such as breadth of work experience, the authors have improved our understanding of the likely academic success factors in these popular courses that are taught across most Business Schools.

The third paper deals specifically with the relative role of academic accounting programmes (AAP) and professional accounting programmes (PAP). Sivakumar Velayutham and Hector Perera argue that AAPs should concentrate on advancing knowledge and critical thinking, while professional skills development should be the main focus of PAPs. They offer a model based on the concept of 'reflective practicum' that could be adopted for this purpose.

Most MBA programmes make extensive use of teaching cases. In the fourth paper, Graeme Currie and Sue Tempest consider how management teachers can develop critical and reflective abilities and independence of thought by using a more constructivist approach when deploying teaching cases. They argue that this approach 'fits' with the needs of a new, more diverse cohort of business students, developing the critical thinking that is required by employers in an increasingly knowledge intensive society.

Business Schools probably teach more international students than most subject disciplines. In the fifth paper, Joanne Smailes and Pat Gannon-Leary provide their own institution as a case study of responding to the challenges of meeting the learning and teaching needs of international business students, including the development of a good practice guide that seeks to reduce the gap that exists between international student expectations of a HEI and their perceptions of the services provided.

It is becoming more commonplace, for larger Business Schools at least, to find discipline specific teaching and learning support models designed to supplement centrally provided student and staff support activities. In the final paper of this issue, Mark Freeman and Carol Johnston provide some evidence from two research-intensive Australian universities on the benefits of these models and conclude that this is a cost-effective, timely and relevant strategy for business faculties to use to improve the quality of teaching and the learning experience of students in a dynamic environment.

Peter Khaola's research note considers organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) within learning environments and reports that self-esteem and commitment were positively and significantly related to OCB, but only one dimension of OCB, namely, altruism or helping behaviour, was related to academic performance of students. Peter calls for more work to encourage learners to engage in this behaviour, especially OCB directed at other learners.

In his teaching note, Donald Nordberg puts forward a model for programme development that attempts to retain the best features of academic peer review while providing a clearer business

justification. Readers involved in the development of professional courses of business education will find Donald's note particularly interesting.

Readers with an eye for detail will have noticed that the contents of this journal now have DOI numbers. The Digital Object Identifier (DOI®) system is for identifying content objects in the digital environment and ensures the work is readily and permanently retrievable. Papers can still be accessed via the Business, Management, Accounting and Finance Subject Centre website but they can also be retrieved by adding the DOI string after the web address <http://dx.doi.org/>

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage readers to attend the annual conference of the Business, Management, Accounting and Finance Subject Centre, which this year is held in the delightful city of Cardiff on April 27-29th 2009. In particular, the St David's Hotel and Spa is a first class venue with unrivalled views across Cardiff Bay. I look forward to seeing you there.