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Editorial

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On behalf of the Editorial Board - welcome to the first edition of The Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education (JoHLSTE). An initial question from a sceptical readership might ask why bring these fields of study together in a single journal title? Of course the practical answer to this is that they were brought together under the UK's Learning and Teaching Support Network (LTSN) and JoHLSTE is a product of the LTSN for this subject grouping. In terms of the organisation of higher education sometimes these groupings sit together in the same faculties, sometimes not. A similarly loose connection exists in terms of the organisation of research. In the recent (2001) Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in the UK it was only Sport that had a clear identity and home in unit of assessment (UoA) 69 - Sports Related Subjects. Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism found themselves cast around a disparate array of UoAs - including Sports, Management and Geography.

But what of the pedagogical and epistemological relationships between these fields of study? These are questions which have not yet been subject to much research and so an initial challenge arises for our research community. Hopefully future editions of this journal will carry articles which examine this inter-relationship.

And what of this issue? Vol. 1 No. 1 establishes a format for JoHLSTE which comprises an editorial, academic papers, practice papers and research notes.

The first two academic papers represent two different lines of enquiry stemming from a common issue. One shared feature of the fields of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism (HLS&T) is their relative youth in terms of knowledge development and as degree subjects in higher education. This means that they do not yet seem to have established what Kuhn (1962) referred to as agreed paradigms.

Marion Stuart's paper entitled *Critical Influences in Higher Education: Lecturer Perspectives* reviews some of the consequences of this lack of an agreed paradigm for the teaching of tourism. In it she presents lecturer perceptions in the context of influences at a national, institutional and departmental level. Stuart finds that whilst "the stated focus remains preparing graduates for the world of work", lecturers (even on explicitly vocational course) are adopting a form of liberal vocationalism - often focusing on academic aspects of the subject. Lecturers, according to Stuart, have an apparent freedom to teach what they are interested in and this means little industry involvement, a reluctance amongst tourism staff to foster links with industry and sometimes a desire to see "vocational links severed". The tensions between industry relevant research output and RAE demands with an emphasis on papers for academic journals are also explored. Stuart concludes that there is a "Two Faced Curriculum". This is explained as that which is "present in documentation and promotional material, and that which is actually being delivered by the Tourism academic community". This may mean that

subject benchmarks are similarly sidelined and gives rise to questions about the validity of conclusions of the mainly document-based subject review recently undertaken in the UK. Perhaps on a more practical level it reinforces the importance of learning outcomes (echoed in teaching sessions and assessments) in bringing transparency to the mysterious "black box" of education.

The relationship between a *field of study* such as hospitality, *knowledge* and the *curriculum* is an important one. To a great extent our positioning in any of these domains affects the way we see the other. For example sociologists cast a very different disciplinary gaze over hospitality than they do say accountants. They report on a very different angle of the phenomenon of hospitality. Indeed the term hospitality itself, like tourism is a contested concept. How we define it has a significant effect on what we teach about it. The second academic paper is titled *Finding the Hospitality Industry* by Paul Slattery. It is the conceptualisation of hospitality that is the subject Slattery's article. His point of departure is the conception of hospitality offered in Lashley and Morrison's recent text *In Search of Hospitality*. Here again the relative youthfulness of hospitality means that it is open to quite serious, and possibly what Kuhn (1962) would describe as incommensurate, definitions about what the subject itself means.

It is interesting to note the level of interest from contributors in Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs). In the third research paper, Stuart McGugan offers an interesting insight into *Using Asynchronous Computer Mediated Conferencing (ACMC) to Support Learning and Teaching*. McGugan's action research method provides an instructive model on how Schön's ideal of Reflective Practice can be operationalised. McGugan uses Salmon's model to reflect upon practice. The article provides useful and timely feedback to the subject community on a contemporary teaching method demonstrating that ACMC can bring benefits such as access to students who are shy. It also introduces some new terms to the language of teaching such as "online fear". Interestingly one of McGugan's conclusions is that ACMS "may become an unmanageable chore rather than a liberating experience" for tutors.

In the Practice Papers section of the journal, Loykie Lomine continues the theme of VLEs in a paper that deals with four misconceptions about on-line teaching (OLT) in HLS&T. These are that:

1. OLT is not for me because my subject is not appropriate at all.
2. OLT is not for me because I am not good enough with computers.
3. OLT is not for me because I do not understand the jargon anyway.
4. OLT is not for me because my students are very happy with the way my course runs.

Lomine's reassurance on each of these areas is followed by an analysis of students' experience at the University of Gloucestershire. Here, students identified four key advantages of Information Technology (IT). These are skills, innovation, flexibility and support. The same advantages were identified by the tutor although technological, pedagogical and practical problems were also disclosed. Lomine's article includes pointers to useful packages and literature and offers a very practical guide to those considering using VLEs.

The second practice paper by Joanne Batey continues the theme of VLEs. Batey considers *Web Page Implementation and Cultural Change* within a first year undergraduate module drawing on her experience as a Sport and Exercise Psychology lecturer. Batey's paper is an interesting reflection on implementing new learning technology in the light of having recently completed a relevant module in her post-graduate certificate in learning and teaching. She argues that students may see new learning technologies as peripheral to "real" teaching and concludes that there are important changes that need to be managed in both student and lecturer learning and teaching cultures to enable successful integration of new learning technologies into the curriculum.

At the other end of the technology scale, Keith Dewar reflects on the human aspects of good teaching. Dewar was the 2001 winner of the Business College Teaching Excellence Award and the Award for Teaching for Years Other than First Year at Massey University, New Zealand, and was asked specifically to share his thoughts *On Being a Good Teacher*. Indeed much of Dewar's article can be placed within Salmon's model (as used by McGugan) considering as it does access and motivation, socialisation, information exchange, knowledge construction and development. Continuing the

"human intervention" theme, Stuart Capstick and Hugh Fleming investigate *Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) in an Undergraduate Hospitality Course*. Capstick and Fleming share their experiences as members of a PAL project at Bournemouth University (UK) funded under phase 3 of the Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning. They discuss the literature which supports PAL as well as the practical issues of recruitment and role of student leaders and the techniques used in PAL.

Nina Downie and Ida Moller's report on student feedback is the last article in this first edition of JoHLSTE. This paper reports on a pilot study conducted with final year students during the summer of 2001 to elicit views on their undergraduate studies. It is a research report on work in progress and demonstrates how this section of the journal will be used to keep its readership abreast of cutting-edge developments in research in the fields of HLS&T education.

There are, for obvious reasons, no comments or rejoinders in this first edition - but it would be surprising and disappointing if some of the articles did not evoke a strong response for discussion in future editions.

In conclusion it is very much hoped that JoHLSTE will be instrumental in developing both theory and practice in its fields of interest. The editors would certainly encourage feedback on the JoHLSTE as well as the submission of papers for future editions. Finally I would like to give special thanks to Laura Wood, Assistant Manager of the LTSN for Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism, based at Oxford Brookes University, UK. Whilst the editors have mainly grappled with the academic issues surrounding the launch of a new journal, Laura has dealt with the practical issues in an extremely efficient and competent way.

Reference

Kuhn, T. (1962) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.