

New Vistas | Policy, Practice and Scholarship in Higher Education

EDITOR'S NOTE

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Change is afoot in the editing of *New Vistas* – as the incoming editor, I have some big shoes to fill as previous editors, Joelle and Stylianos have set a high standard. A good editor should, beyond this introductory note, be invisible to the reader. This invisible hand is much like previous ideas about students; where we hoped to shield them from the politics and general shenanigans so that they could focus on their studies and enjoy their time at university. In this model, we imagined that students should see the graceful swan of Higher Education glide along the lake's surface and never see the frantic paddling of knobby legs and webbed feet below. Changing times mean that this scenario is no longer true and students are now more informed about the policies and practices of Higher Education than ever before and, like academic staff, want to examine the world they live in. As the new editor I hope to guide our authors to deal with big questions – asking them to take a new look at the world of Higher Education and ask, "What is going on?"

In this context, the contributors to this edition scrutinise many key aspects of Higher Education. We open with two articles that deal with creative inquiry – Pan discusses the serious issue of LEGO and Cordeiro examines project-based learning. Hatzipanagos and Tait also offer insight into modern pedagogy through the perspectives of professionals who have been involved with Massive Open Online Courses. From debate on overarching pedagogical issues, Alge moves the discussion to look at the human experience in a sensitive and richly insightful piece on autism and the law. In taking a new perspective on the topics of gender, sex, and society, Hine also offers a sensitive and thoughtful paper that discusses how we might encourage boys' interest in traditionally 'feminine' subjects. Attitudinal perspectives and norms are also the focus of Magne's article where students' attitudes towards accents of English are examined. The last article of this edition returns us to pedagogy, as Blair asks the question, "What is a lecturer?" Finally, we close with a profile of PhD student Abdulazeez Rotimi.

After a cold winter, cocooned in their academic shells, the new season and the possibility of sunshine seems to have stimulated our authors' minds. Spurred on by the changing season, this Spring edition of *New Vistas* is full of new, engaging and thought-provoking content that seeks to ask important questions about the very nature of Higher Education. Here we see a rich collection of original ideas emerging into the academic sunlight, ready for scrutiny, debate and deliberation. Of course, not all change is so progressive and not all change leads to insight and growth but, in a world of transformation, the task of examining the role, purpose and position of Higher Education has never been more important.

Dr Erik Blair
New Vistas Editor

MISSION STATEMENT

New Vistas is published by the University of West London (UWL) and provides a forum to disseminate research, commentary, and scholarly work that engages with the complex agenda of higher education in its local, national and global context.

Published twice a year (with occasional special issues), for a broad (academic, international and professional) audience, the journal will feature research and scholarly analysis on higher education policy; current issues in higher education; higher education pedagogy; professional practice; the relation of higher education to work and the economy; and discipline-specific research.

We welcome thought-provoking scholarly contributions from external and internal authors, with the explicit intention to give a voice to early-career researchers and scholars.

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