

Editors' introduction

We are pleased to present the first edition of *Compass: The Journal of Learning and Teaching at the University of Greenwich*. It intends to champion ideas and practices about learning and teaching within the university and its partner colleges and, through sharing, to promote debate.

Like other higher education institutions in the UK, staff at Greenwich have to deal with incompatible demands on their time, teaching and administration, developing scholarly communities, engagement in consultation, research and publication. Furthermore, the combination of national and local funding policy in the context of the credit crunch, the anticipated research excellence framework, the widespread use of new social networking software like Facebook and Twitter, to name but a few factors, now permeate our teaching and learning environments.

Our learning and teaching strategy is informed by a pedagogical philosophy that embodies a particular conception of the academic and professional development of students. Our vision for developing 'the Greenwich graduate' is to design curricula and pedagogies through which students are able to feel they are participants in a scholarly community of enquiry, supported by staff working together in a community of practice. The development of such curricula and pedagogies will support the drive towards greater student engagement and afford the possibility of moving towards the co-creation of knowledge with students.

Fostering students' excitement about, and commitment to, scholarship, provides an integrated means of developing the necessary academic literacy (including information literacy) and communication skills and all of the associated skills of research and critical enquiry. Our long-term aim is to build the confidence of students in their growing capabilities as emergent professionals, who can go on to secure employment or move comfortably into further study and research.

The tension between our perceptions of the university as an environment to support learning, on the one hand, and as a place for research on the other, is felt, and resolved by academics and academic support staff every day. As a 'research-informed' university, which derives 90 per cent of its income from teaching, we hope that *Compass* will help to inform our thinking about, and build more integrated relationships between research and scholarship, teaching and learning.

The mixture of short thought-provoking pieces, longer academic articles, case studies and, in subsequent editions, letters, represent viewpoints about many of these relationships from different Schools and university services. There are significant differences in the pedagogic stances adopted by different disciplines, but, as a learning organisation, we can learn much from one another. We hope this first edition provides a forum for debate by staff and students to encourage reflection upon their practice and to stimulate innovation and new ideas.

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