

Editorial

Having launched the first of the *Teaching in Lifelong Learning: a journal to inform and improve practice* journal some six months ago, we have been delighted by the positive responses we have received. Individuals have commented on the benefits that access to a journal by the sector and for the sector brings to them: reading up-to-date information on issues that confront them on a regular if not daily basis; stimulating debates and alternative viewpoints on those issues; and seeing the opportunities for their work to be published in the future to name but a few.

This issue includes a number of papers on aspects of Continuing Professional Development and interestingly, two of these are an exploration of the role of scholarly activity and research in the sector. This is particularly apt at a time when there is a greater focus on Higher Education in Further Education (FE) and the role of scholarly activity, and how this might be different in FE. Other papers also contribute to the debate around CPD. The requirement for numeracy teachers to have personal skills and qualifications at relatively higher levels than that at which they teach is also brought into question, as is the question of the role of Middle Managers in supporting their institutional systems and staff; an additional feature is that of the CPD of Middle Managers themselves. The Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETTs) have undertaken considerable work with Adult and Community Learning (ACL) on Initial Teacher Training and this is discussed in a paper on the work that has been produced in the London region. Mentoring continues to present the sector with challenges and the mentors' perspectives on their role is explored in this Issue.

The sector is facing a difficult future, as are all education sectors, in the round of budget cuts that will surely come our way - whatever government is in power. We are concerned that the benefits that have accrued to the sector in terms of the collaborative working that has been developed will be lost for the present generation of teachers and trainees, and the lessons we have learned so far will need to be 're-discovered' in a few years' time. There has been considerable investment in the sector and to lose it now for it to be re-generated again at a future time would not only be seen to be a scandalous waste of public money, but also would wrench opportunities from practitioners to continue improving the education and training that students deserve. Investment in mentoring, Subject Learning Coaches, e-learning and the CETTs themselves are examples of such expenditure. Making this journal a vibrant and dynamic contribution to the sector will help us to maintain the discussions that will be needed in the difficult times ahead.

