

Editorial

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The *Journal of the Foundation Year Network* is a product of the community of practitioners who provide teaching to and support for students mainly in foundation year programmes but also on other routes into degree courses in (mostly) UK higher education institutions. This community is represented by the 'Foundation Year Network' (FYN). The FYN seeks to represent, promote and support

- good practice in foundation year provision;
- the academic and scholarly activities of foundation year practitioners;
- continuing professional development opportunities for foundation year practitioners;
- foundation years as part of a diversity of provision for entry into higher education.¹

The FYN's peer-reviewed journal aligns with these 'objects'. The FYN also organises an annual conference and most of the articles in each volume of the *Journal* originate as presentations or workshops at that conference.² The title of the 2022 annual conference was 'Communities of Learning'. The particular 'community of learning' represented by the Foundation Year Network is a diverse one, offering a variety of different kinds of foundation years, across a wide range of academic disciplines and aimed at different 'target' groups of prospective students. These include prospective students seeking to change subject specialism; those with insufficient A-levels for direct entry to a degree course; those who have not had the chance to take A levels at all; students from 'widening participation' backgrounds; mature students returning to study; and international students who require academic, language and/or cultural preparation for study in a UK-based institution. This diversity raises challenges for the FYN, but also offers opportunities for learning as a community; the ways in which that community rises to the challenges is one of its greatest strengths. But behind the diversity lies unity: unity around a shared desire – even passion – to provide students with the best possible learning opportunities and support in their learning that we can, given the many and varied challenges we as foundation year (and other) practitioners face.

The *Journal* is reflective of both the diversity and the unity that characterises the FYN. We as an editorial team have carefully scrutinised all the articles (you'll be pleased to hear – that's our job!)³, and we have been impressed by the ability of our colleagues from a wide range of different academic disciplines and support roles to contribute valuable insights that are relevant to all of us in the FYN in ways that are accessible to all of us in the FYN. We have also been impressed by the extent to which the articles collected in this volume address many of the key

¹ These are taken from the 'Articles of Association' of The Foundation Year Network Limited.

² However, we welcome relevant articles that are not associated with the FYN annual conference.

³ All the articles have also gone out to reviewers, who, between them, bring broad disciplinary expertise.

pedagogical issues that face not just foundation year practitioners, but also our colleagues across the HE sector. We could list here the issues that are addressed in one way or another in this volume – but it would be a long list! The list would include such things as: staff-student partnership; authentic assessment; community and belonging; integration of digital tools; reflective practice; social justice; attendance and engagement; transition; widening participation; innovation; social constructivism; academic support; pastoral support; value for money; industrial action; EDI ... Moreover, along with the diversity of disciplines and support roles represented, there is also a diversity of approaches to the issues, including historical studies, articles based on practitioner research of various sorts, articles that engage in depth with other scholarly work on the topic (including, increasingly, articles in *JFYN*) and a reflective piece. In fact, all this means that not only should the articles be of interest to the community of foundation year practitioners, but they should also be relevant to other colleagues in the HE sector. So, once you have sampled the volume for yourself, do encourage other colleagues who share our passion for teaching and learning to dip into some of the articles too!

This volume of *JFYN* opens with three articles specifically on the theme of ‘community’, the third of which reflects on peer-assisted learning. This leads nicely into an article on team-based learning, followed by one on peer-mentoring that explicitly adopts a social justice perspective. An article on value-for-money for foundation year students comes next. There are then two articles that explore the implementation of digital tools in teaching. The next two articles take different approaches to curriculum development. The penultimate piece reflects on academic support for foundation year students before – appropriately – a final reflective piece about outreach.

JFYN really is a product of a **community**. Thank you to all those who help the *Journal* not only to keep going, but to flourish. Thanks must go to our pool of reviewers who help us ensure that the *Journal* is a high quality, academically-rigorous product. Thank you, of course, to those who have offered articles for publication. And, particularly, thanks to **you**, the reader, for whom this ‘product’ is intended, whether or not you are part of our immediate community of learning. We hope you enjoy reading these articles and find much to inform your own thinking and practice!

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