

It will be clear to all readers that we have here a new and different journal. It is different in a number of ways – some of which I would like to outline here.

Its design has been completely reconsidered. Operating as we do in the world of design and technology, it will always be the case that we shall be judged – at least in part – by our ability to project ourselves as seriously addressing the design agendas of the day. The layout and presentation of the journal are important in making it readable and accessible, but also send important messages of a more subliminal kind. The Design and Technology Association (DATA) has rightly seen the necessity of grasping this difficult nettle, and I hope that readers will respond positively to our attempts to upgrade the visual identity of the journal.

The contents of the journal have also been the subject of very considerable debate. A number of content matters will be immediately obvious to readers. We have established a single journal for the profession rather than the two that DATA formerly produced. We have welded primary school and secondary school concerns into a single 'curriculum development' section. And along with this we have incorporated sections dealing specifically with Special Needs, with Initial Teacher Education, with Reviews and with Research. The new journal is starting out with these groupings, but we will keep them under constant review.

We have, for a long time, been in need of a single professional journal that can reflect and debate the concerns of all those whose work is centred on design and technology as a feature of the general education of young people. Having just completed a research study that highlighted some of the discontinuities that exist between primary and secondary practice, it is self-evidently a good thing that we should seek to build together a more coherent pattern of provision. Sharing these concerns in a single journal makes this possible, and I hope that all readers will derive interest from all sections of the journal. Similarly, the messages that are emerging from those working in Special schools or in Special Needs units of mainstream schools should be aired and reflected upon by us all. Those of us whose work is predominantly concerned with the preparation of teachers have a different perspective to offer – or rather several different perspectives, since the issues arising from primary initial teacher education are in many ways significantly different from those arising from secondary ITE. Many of us have been working on some ITE model of 'partnership' with schools, and it makes transparent good sense to allow this single journal to share the strengths and weaknesses of our practice, from the school and the higher education perspectives. The Reviews section has always been a valuable feature of the DATA journals – giving brief professional 'thumbnail' insights into the range of products and services that are

available. We have retained it – and supplemented it with reviews of the major events throughout the year. John Eggleston's review of the Design and Technology Education Exhibition is a case in point here.

When I was asked to take on the editorship of this new journal, it was made clear to me that the need for a 'Research' section was well understood. After 30 or so years of trying to establish design and technology in the curriculum, we remain probably the least understood – least researched – area of curriculum practice. In the UK we have led the world in many of the developments that have resulted in technology curricula springing up all around the globe, and one manifestation of this was evident at the recent international technology education conference in Jerusalem where the UK was among the best represented nations. The research that is being undertaken here (by research students, by classroom teachers, by research teams, and by colleagues in universities) must be shared with – reflected upon and criticised by – the profession at large. Those who do not study and learn from their experience can never make progress.

I hope that each edition of the journal will have at least one article discussing approaches to technology in other countries. Whilst we do not think this would merit a separate 'international' section, it is important that we have the opportunity to reflect upon parallel developments around the world, and the first of these – in this first edition – concerns practice in North America.

The current design, format, structure and content of this new journal have emerged from a series of discussions between the DATA staff, the editorial board and myself. What you see here is the first edition and it represents our best stab at a starting point from which we intend to develop. And a critical part of that development process is in the hands of our readers. We would very much like to hear your reactions to all or any of the issues raised here. Indeed, without some feedback from the readership we cannot know whether the journal is meeting the needs of the profession. We are open to comment, suggestion and criticism and we intend to regard the first year of the journal as a formative process – evolving the kind of journal that meets the needs of all those whose professional interest lies in design and technology in education.

We would be pleased to receive contributions for any of the sections of the journal. The current guidelines for submitting pieces are printed at the back of the Journal and these too are being kept under review by the editorial board. So if you have a point of view about current developments, or an interesting idea for school projects, or some research that helps us better to understand what we are doing (or why we are doing it), then write it up and send it in.

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