
EDITORIAL

Reflections on a First Anniversary and Journal Ranking

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It is a year since the first issue of the International Journal of Practice-based Learning in Health and Social Care (pblh) went live. The anniversary of this achievement is cause for some reflection on how far we have travelled in the past year. In many senses it feels like much longer but in the life course of a journal I guess we, and you as readers, are only just beginning to get a sense of its scope, potential and progress. One way to gain a sense of how far we have come is to compare our achievements to other similar journals.

Not usually one for league tables or rankings I find myself suddenly fiercely competitive. The Higher Education Academy currently publishes twelve journals in total, some of which, for example Engineering Education, are very well established. Bioscience Education is ranked first of the twelve, its usage far outstripping the next competitor but then it has twenty-one volumes published. However, analysis of downloads of pblh articles, which is fed back to journal editors monthly, is encouraging. In April 2014, pblh ranked very respectably in sixth position on the list. Analysis of the most downloaded 50 articles across all HEA journals showed that six articles from this journal appeared in the top 50, the highest in second position. Whatever one thinks about the worth of league tables, and they are certainly familiar in educational institutions, organisations and companies, as well as in sport, they certainly create a competitive edge which is compulsive. By inference the HEA ranking suggests that the journal is becoming known more widely and that there is a community of practice with a scholarly interest in practice-based learning to whom the journal appeals. What we need to do now is to expand the journal's audience.

The National Association of Educators in Practice (NAEP) Annual Conference, held this year in April at Coventry University, provided opportunity to raise the journal's profile further but also to encourage colleagues to publish their work taking it that one step further than the conference presentation. Myself and co-editors, Viny Cross and Jill Thistlethwaite are all regular conference goers who have worked hard over the past year to promote the journal nationally and internationally wherever we travel, but our efforts are limited; this is where we need the help of the readership. You as practitioners, academics and students need to use it, to write for it, to reference articles in your own work and tell your colleagues about it. So please spread the word and help us achieve our ambition to climb those rankings!