

# Competences for the future: Trends and challenges

## Editorial

Mary Gobbi  
Editor

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As I write this reflection at the beginning of May, it is timely to think of our colleagues around the world who are in the heat of the pandemic, particularly colleagues in India. In November I wrote: ‘where might we be for the next edition in May 2021? Who knows? Will we be emerging from the metaphorical winter of discontent<sup>1</sup> into the ‘summer sun’ armed with our jabs, swabs, and test results?’

Some of us do see the ‘summer sun’ with light at the end of the tunnel- albeit no one knows for how long. Others remain in the grip of overwhelming infections surrounded by death, disease, and associated poverty. The importance of collegiality and equity cannot be underestimated as COVID 19 is a one world problem. John Donne’s words come to mind:

no man is an island (entire of itself). A person requires the company and support of others and society as a whole in order to thrive.<sup>2</sup>

As Donne argued, the connections between the individual, (man or woman), a supportive network and broader society are necessary to thrive. However, in our era of pandemic, what we observe is more fundamental; the company and support of others and society *is necessary to survive*. The negative consequences of isolation, mask wearing and reductions in social and physical activity has its impact on young and old alike. We now have evidence that young children are behind in their social skills and language development due to less social contact, but more crucially contact behind masks. Here lie challenges for our education systems, not just now, but as different age groups feed into Higher Education carrying the experiences of COVID with them.

The editorial team would like to thank those authors who rose to the challenge of generating papers related to the pandemic. We are delighted to

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from: William Shakespeare, *Richard III*, Act 1, Scene 1.

<sup>2</sup> From: *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, John Donne 1624.

announce that for the next two editions at least, November 2021 and May 2022, there will be a special section of the Journal focusing on the implications for Higher Education of the pandemic. We are honoured to welcome Professor Anca Greere as the Section Editor for this section of the Journal.

Anca is Director of the European Master's Programme in Translation Studies and Terminology at the Babes-Bolyai University in Romania. In this capacity, she is an active member of the European Master's in Translation Network coordinated by the European Commission. Anca is an international quality assurance expert who has broad ranging experience of collaborating with governments, agencies and higher education institutions to design and successfully implement quality assurance approaches which support a positive educational experience for all stakeholders and contribute to quality cultures across educational sectors. In this capacity, she has collaborated with multiple QA agencies in the UK (QAA and BAC), Estonia, Georgia, Lithuania, Romania, Saudi Arabia and Jamaica.

For a chance to be published in the November 2021 edition we require submissions before the end of June 2021. Further details on this Special Section are found on the Journal web site (<https://tuningjournal.org/announcement>).

This edition comprises a small group of papers, largely due to the impact of the pandemic upon the availability of reviewers. However, we have many in the pipeline for a bumper edition in November. I would like to take this opportunity to genuinely thank our reviewers who, amidst the business of their daily academic life and home circumstances, have helped us by reviewing an amazing range of papers from numerous disciplines and countries.

Wishing all our readers a summer of promise in the North and a quiet Winter in the South free from fresh waves of pandemic. Happy writing folks!

*The editorial team*

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