This issue begins with a special section from the LWF conference put together by Mark van’t Hooft. The first paper is titled “From ‘Posh Pen and Pad’ to Participatory Pedagogies: One Story of a Netbook Implementation Project with 108 Pupils in Two Primary Schools” by Karl Royle and Mark Hadfield. The paper “The Perceptions of Health and Social Care Students of Using Mobile 360 Degree Performance Feedback Tools in Practice Placement Settings” is by J. D. Taylor, C. A. Dearnley, J. C. Laxton, I. Nkosana-Nyawata, and S. Rinomhota.

In addition to the special section, this issue also contains two regular papers. The first of these is “Developing Web Prototypes for Mobile-Learning Design Research” by Alan Foley and Heng Luo from the School of Education at Syracuse University. This paper explores issues around design based research by studying a prototype created for iAdvocate, an educational mobile application designed to support parent advocacy and parental involvement in the educational process for students with disabilities. The authors address a number of issues around design based research, prototyping and working with potential users, but perhaps their final conclusion is the most generalizable for other mobile learning developers. Although the original intention was to create an iOS app, an early prototype for evaluation used a web based solution. However the authors conclude that ‘No matter how closely a web-based prototype functions like the final product, in later stages of the design process the difference between the prototype platform and final platform is too great, providing little useful information for designers.’ This may well be a valuable insight for others embarking on similar cycles of design based research in mobile learning.

The final paper in this issue is “Six Scenarios of Exploiting an Ontology Based, Mobilized Learning Environment” by Gábor Kismihók, Ildikó Szabó, and Réka Vas from Corvinus University of Budapest. In this paper the authors explore various scenarios that work across a common domain ontology. Some of these scenarios have been fully implemented and tested whereas others are work in progress. The outcomes of this work may potentially provide for a greater linking of educational design and professional skill requirements, among other benefits. The ontology supports a learning environment that ‘enables the development of customized qualification programmes, based on the individual’s previous qualifications, completed levels, corporate training and practical experiences.’ Ontologies have been widely explored in the context of technology enhanced learning, but few projects have addressed the scope and scale of the work described here.

I hope you enjoy the diverse topics covered in this issue of the journal, which sees us enter the fourth year of publication.

David Parsons
Editor-in-Chief
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David Parsons is Associate Professor of Information Technology at Massey University, Auckland, New Zealand. He has a PhD in Information Technology from Nottingham Trent University (UK) and has wide experience in both academia and industry. He is the founding Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Mobile and Blended Learning and author of a number of texts on computer programming, web application development and mobile learning. His work has been published in many international journals, including Computers & Education, IEEE Transactions on Learning Technologies and Software Practice and Experience. He chaired the Conference on Mobile Learning Technologies and Applications in 2007 and was co-editor of Innovative Mobile Learning: Techniques and Technologies (Information Science Reference, 2009). He is a member of the International Association for Mobile Learning and a professional member of the British Computer Society.