I am very pleased to be able to contribute a Foreword to this important collection of case studies of the changes that the adoption of technology enhanced learning demands of institutions, teachers and researchers, and learners. The volume of essays is important in a number of ways. Firstly, the collection is truly international, and offers case studies from many parts of the world. The substantial international experience of the Editors has brought together a collection that is compelling in its breadth of reference. This is of great value, as the professional understandings of educators must now be international, to reflect the globalising world that they and their students live and work in. It is also the case that for this subject matter in particular— the adoption of new technologies for learning and teaching – the very technologies themselves make international experience both available to us all, and also create an imperative for educational institutions to work more and more across national boundaries.

Two key dimensions of this new age have to be assessed and deployed for the purposes of supporting technology-enhanced learning. These are:

- connectedness
- information and resources

The key to the changes that have been bewildering over the last decade has in fact been the interrelationship of the two. Most learners now have access to huge resources that have hitherto been locked behind the entrance desks of university libraries in addition to the extraordinary amount of sources and archives that have elsewhere been similarly opened up. This is combined with our ability to discuss these, and provide our own accounts of them, through the development of Web 2.0 tools – blogs, wikis, forums and beyond - which has meant the growth of so much learner-generated information and commentary, of all qualities, on the web. Thus we see communities grow up which are fluid, accepting new members every day at the same time as others leave. This follows directly in some aspects the traditions of distance education which have freed up the learner from the constraints of time and space and accelerated the shift from didactive to facilitative modes of teaching and learning within a constructivist framework.

As a result of this, enquiry and scholarship have become core activities in almost all fields. The new technologies have played an extraordinary part in liberating knowledge from the locally produced and managed to the universally available with contributions from around the world. Enquiry, supported by scholarship in the broader sense, thus stands at the heart of human activity. It is now a form of activity in all its variety of far wider interest than just the world of the University. It has over the last 30 years spread down through the age groups and across organizational types. While 30 years ago enquiry in the sense of independent, even if supported, research was primarily restricted to postgraduate work
in universities, it has now spread into baccalaureate or undergraduate degrees, and even into schools, as important practice that learners need to master. It is also at the core of organizational and business practice across all sectors.

The case studies in this volume bring these points out across a range of fields of activity. Finally it is worth saying that the case study approach has its particular merits in this field. It allows learning to be created inductively, from the particular to the more thematic and conceptual concerns to which it may give rise. In this way the Editors have provided space for readers to create their own learning as they reflect on the issues of educational need, pedagogy, policy, and management, all of which are challenged by the continuing fast development of technology-enhanced approaches to learning.

I commend this volume to its readers, and am grateful to the Editors for the contribution it makes to our field of work.

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