Guest Editorial Preface

Special Issue on Designing Mobile Teacher Education

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The mobilisation and ubiquitisation of computing through the development and deployment of innovative devices, apps, distributed and virtualised software and infrastructures, are potentially making learning, teaching and assessment more engaging, interactive and effective.

The increased, and increasing, mobility of technology has the potential to mediate new opportunities for learning in classrooms and schools, opening up whole new possibilities for pupils and teachers to engage with, and explore different subject areas of the curriculum, in novel and transformative ways.

Alongside the increasing mobility of the technology, mobile computing is also becoming more usable and extensible, with features and functionality that were only a decade ago difficult to implement, e.g. virtual and augmented reality, now increasingly easy to design and utilise through user-friendly and simple but powerful apps.

Mobile devices and apps are also enabling new forms of creativity for students and their teachers, for example: the design of multi-touch, interactive books. Indeed, the potential of mobile technology is especially high in education where there is an explicit focus on supporting teachers' and their students' collaborative creativity and design, with and through the kinds of novel and highly-usable mobile technologies that we increasingly have available to us today.

However, while the technology develops apace, and becomes more mobile, usable and extensible, key questions continue to emerge for the educational technology and learning sciences research communities. These questions are especially apt in the context of contemporary teacher education, which is a crucially important engine in transforming educational systems internationally so they are fit-for-purpose for the 21st Century:

- How can we effectively design and deploy mobile learning in teacher education contexts and settings?
- What exemplars can we draw on to inform best practice in the design, deployment and evaluation of mobile teacher education?
- What are the barriers and challenges we face, and how can we mitigate them?
- Which conceptual and theoretical frameworks and tools can we draw on to help ensure our research and practice in mobile teacher education are rigorous and principled?

This second special issue of the *International Journal of Mobile and Blended Learning* on the topic of mobile teacher education aims to build on the first special issue on the topic (Hall, Ó Grádaigh & Ní Ghuidhir, 2016), and provide a most recent, state-of-the-art picture of emerging innovations and developments with mobile learning, where it is specifically appropriated, designed and adapted for teacher education.

The concept of developing a series of special issues for the *International Journal of Mobile and Blended Learning* resulted from the first three annual MiTE Conferences, the first conferences to focus specifically on mobile learning for teacher educators; MiTE 2015 and 2016 were held in Galway, Ireland and the 2017 conference was hosted in January 2017 by CalState University, California, (the largest teacher education provider in the US).

The conference, which was held again in Galway, Ireland in January 2018, has helped significantly to mobilise international teacher educators' practice and research in the emerging area of mobile learning design. Representing the confluence and increasing synergy of international research in the emerging domain of mobile learning within teacher education, a new Mobile Learning Network for Teacher Educators was launched, and hosted its inaugural AGM at the MiTE 2018 Conference in Galway.Furthermore, this special issue has been inspired by the MTTEP Project (Mobilising and Transforming Teacher Education Pedagogies), a flagship European initiative to advance and augment teacher education through mobile learning design and deployment; the MTech World University Partnership for mobile teacher education; and the newly funded European project, DEIMP: Designing and Evaluating Innovative Mobile Pedagogies.

We are pleased to introduce this second edition of the IJMBL on the topic of designing mobile learning within teacher education, and we invite you now to read the articles, starting with the commentary by Dr William Rankin, which serves as a highly engaging and insightful review of the papers included for publication here. Rankin's article and the collected papers in this special issue together afford key insights into the new and high-potential domain of mobile learning, and the mobilisation of teacher education through innovative mobile and portable apps, infrastructures and technologies.

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