Introduction

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This book has been especially written for those at the beginning of their career as teachers of design & technology, although it is likely to be of interest and use to all those involved in teaching the subject, preparing teachers to teach, or providing professional development. George Hicks, writing in 1983, captured the challenge of teaching the subject:

'Teaching facts is one thing, teaching pupils in such a way that they can apply facts is another; but providing learning opportunities which encourage pupils to use information naturally when handling uncertainty, in a manner which results in capability, is a challenge of a different kind'. (p. 1)

One-year post-graduate certificate in education programmes and in-post graduate teaching programmes for design & technology teachers are all too short. Understandably their emphasis is on meeting the immediate and relatively short-term needs of those entering the teaching profession. A particular omission is current research findings that are relevant to classroom practice in design & technology. There is no shortage of high quality and pertinent research but this is spread throughout the academic literature and not easily accessible to busy teachers in the early stages of their career. "**Design & technology - for the next generation**" has been written to fill this gap. Each of the authors is an acknowledged international expert with many years' experience in a relevant field of study. Most of them have been schoolteachers at some stage in their careers. They were commissioned to distil their areas of expertise into readable pieces that were provocative, would stimulate reflection and lead those entering the profession to question current practice and engage in curriculum development. The result is a collection of writing that will serve as the basis for considerable professional development.

It is not a book to be read through from cover to cover in the order prescribed by the text. Rather it is a book to dip into and revisit in response to your needs as a practicing teacher in the early stages of your career.

This book has been written to help bring the teaching and educational research communities for design & technology closer together. Each chapter has a list of books and articles for further reading as well as a list of references so that you can develop your understanding of issues you find of particular interest or relevance. On each page you will find questions to stimulate thought and discussion. You may not agree with the authors but you will not be able to ignore what they have to say. Each chapter has a brief biography of the author accompanied by his or her photograph. So if by some chance you should meet them you will be able to introduce yourself, strike up a conversation and continue the debate.

All curricula are contested and as an arena in a school's curriculum so are the very nature and purpose of design & technology. As a new entrant to the profession your contribution to the discourse that informs the shape and direction of design & technology is essential to avoid ossification, sidelining and irrelevance. It is our hope that this book will empower you to make your mark in the design & technology curriculum.

Reference

Hicks, G. (1983, Autumn). 'Another step forward for design and technology'. "Assessment of Performance Unit", 4.