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## Editor's Letter

Welcome to the AHEAD Journal, we have a bumper edition for you, ready for a Yuletide read! We are pleased to have a range of articles featuring approaches to both working with such a diversity of students with disabilities and the experiences of students and graduates. I am sure you will find inspiration from the great work we are showcasing.

I write as the RAPP research project with its resulting Guidelines publication is coming together, with a digital launch on 14th December 2022, our article gives a flavour of what's to come!

CEO Dara Ryder poses us with some prescient dilemmas around the use of Artificial Intelligence within higher education.

In this edition articles cover employment, including supporting people with Acquired Brain Injury into work; and developing an Inclusive Hiring policy using the hospitality sector as a case study.

Relating to student support, as the profession for sign language interpreters expands, we hear about the journey for interpreters starting out after graduation. There are opportunities to hear about exploring dyslexia as a difference rather than a deficit and on the role of Personal Assistants working with students with disabilities.

Following COVID-19 the team at University College Cork have explored whether virtual technologies can support people with disabilities' participation in education and employment.

This edition contains a lot of information on the impact and opportunity of digital accessibility, including web/app-based tools as an intervention to support students in the MyUSE project; access for people with cognitive disabilities in the LIVE-IT programme; and using social media. I am sure you will find it very helpful in keeping up to date with implementing accessibility in your own work.

There is also information on the recent activities of the AHEAD team.

I do hope you enjoy this bumper edition!

Season's Greetings

Barbara Waters

Editor AHEAD Journal



## **Barbara Waters**

Journal Editor, AHEAD

Barbara Waters is the Project Lead on the Reasonable Accommodations, Professional Placements (RAPP) Project, Barbara was Chief Executive of Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities, UK. 1996- 2010. Barbara represented Skill nationally on policy issues in education and disability related to post 16 education, training and employment. Since 2010 Barbara has worked as a researcher on further and higher education and disability. She was part of the LINK European network concerned with disabled students in higher education and has undertaken research on competence standards and learning outcomes in higher education for the Equality Challenge Unit, UK, published in 2015, looking particularly at Nursing, Teaching, Foreign Languages and STEM subjects. She was the evaluator of the Erasmus + programme on Universal Design for Learning completed in October 2016, and rapporteur for AHEAD Ireland in the MappED access programme with the Erasmus Student Network in 2017. Currently, she is the editor of the peer to peer Journal for AHEAD Ireland. She has an MA in Business and Public Sector Strategy and received an honorary doctorate from the Open University, UK.

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