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BECOMING TOGETHER: PRACTICE, IDENTITY, AND THE EMERGENT WHOLE

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Jan Hendrik Roodt and Rachel McNamara

Mā te kimi ka kite, mā te kite ka mōhio, mā te mōhio ka mārama
Through seeking, one finds. Through finding, one gains knowledge. Through knowledge, one attains enlightenment

This seventh issue of *Scope* (*Work-based Learning*) explores becoming as a layered and shared process. This theme resonates with John Dewey's idea of growth through lived experience, with French philosopher Edgar Morin's understanding of complexity and recursive transformation, and with the European educational traditions of *Bildung* and *dannelse*, German and Danish terms that describe the ongoing shaping of self in relation to the world, others, and society. These perspectives do not stand apart. They mingle through the pages of this issue, informing, challenging, and often complementing one another.

Becoming is not a straight path. It gathers meaning through participation, dialogue, and response. The Kawa model, developed by Canadian occupational therapist Michael Iwama and grounded in Japanese tradition, offers a helpful metaphor: like a river (*kawa* in Japanese) our lives are shaped by the flow and resistance of our surroundings. The river bends, carries debris, slows in some places, and deepens in others. Our sense of identity, like that river, forms through movement, through encounters, and through the landscape we inhabit.

We change as we take action, and the context we work within changes, too. The individual and the collective move together. In this sense, becoming is not simply about gaining skill. It involves a kind of artful mastery—of the self, of our stance toward work, and of how we meet the Other.

These writings remind us that becoming does not happen alone. Each contribution matters. Each question asked, and each practice shared, adds to the whole. Across this issue are moments of inquiry, reflection, and transformation. They deepen what it means to take part, to show up fully, and to keep becoming through seeking, through doing, and through insight that gathers over time.

Ko te pae tawhiti whāia kia tata, ko te pae tata whakamaua kia tina
Seek the distant horizon so it may become close; hold fast to what is near

In continuing this journey of becoming, we turn toward the spaces where practice meets possibility. Here, learning is not confined to curriculum or credentials; it pulses through conversation, through shared labour, and through the quiet moments of doubt and discovery. The horizon shifts as we move, and with each step, we reorient ourselves toward what matters.

Come with us, not as passive readers but as fellow travellers, as we follow the shifting waterline of the riverbank or beach, the place where ideas meet and patterns of thought converge. Just as waves carry shells and driftwood

to the shore, each contribution in this issue brings material that nourishes new understanding. These works inform and invite. They ripple outward, offering many points of entry into the layered terrain of *Scope (Work-based Learning)* issue 7.

We begin this 2025 journey on solid ground, a rock if you will, anchored by an article on ako. Glenys Ker and her co-authors remind us that learning is not transactional but relational. It is shaped by lived experience, by the presence of others, and by the encounters that contour our professional selves.

From this foundation, we move with the current toward a discussion piece by Otago Polytechnic Occupational Therapy and Engineering lecturers. The authors explore the shift from traditional campus-based programmes to work-augmented degrees, asking what it means to change course, and what is carried or left behind in the process. Tiju Mathew Thomas continues this flow, navigating the place of mixed-mode learning in engineering education. His article challenges us to reimagine context, to avoid disengagement, and to embrace the collaborative opportunities that form when disciplines meet.

As we follow the river to the ocean and coastline, new horizons open. Languages shift like waves; perspectives widen like the tide. Celine Kearney from Wintec leads us into transdisciplinary waters with an account of adapting English language teaching to changing cohorts. Her reflections highlight the strength of community and the work of translation across cultures and fields. Anthony Dady carries this focus further, showing how a project to connect church congregations to their communities involved dialogue and ebb and flow between self and collective. His work reminds us that becoming is tidal: recursive, relational, and rhythmic.

Ritesh Navin Kumar and Kylie New's writings extend this rhythm, offering insights into cultural identity and its evolution. Kumar delves into his heritage to ground his mathematics pedagogy and research, while New reports on how an internship in Japan transformed two culinary graduates. Their pieces show us that becoming is not linear. It meanders, it doubles back, and it gathers depth over time.

Next, Martin Andrew, Steve Henry, and Jeremy Taylor take us into doctoral waters, where reflection becomes a sounding line. Their work charts a liminal space, like a shifting sandbar, where the ground beneath is never fixed. Certainty dissolves, and from the turbulence new forms of professional practice and identity begin to surface.

From here, we move into the ethical waters of research. Sam Mann, Ruth Myers, and Glenys Forsyth ask what it means to navigate with integrity, to seek mastery not as control but as attunement to the currents around us. Their work calls for a new approach in professional practice spaces to ethics as becoming: both an art and a science, a practice of balance as much as direction.

Leigh Quadling-Miernik's contribution charts a voyage in constant motion. Each place in her journey leaves traces like shells on the beach, shaping and reshaping how she sees herself. What emerges is a travel record as a story of academic and professional identity forming at the meeting point of the global and the personal.

Finally, we reach the cliffs at the edge of the shoreline. Tim Lynch's article stands there, challenging established academic norms and reimagining how written work lives within learning. His piece moves like a wave: crashing, receding, returning, restless yet full of possibility. The coastline here reminds us that becoming is formed in that restless play of tide and rock.

The edge of the ocean is never stable. Each tide redraws the line between land and water. Benoit Mandelbrot, the mathematician who coined the term fractal, reminds us that a coastline cannot be precisely measured. Its length depends on the scale of our tools. So too with becoming: it is felt more than fixed, shaped through currents of learning, tension, and care. And just as rivers gather many streams before meeting the sea, each contribution here flows toward the whole.

As the opening whakatauki reminds us, understanding unfolds not all at once, but through seeking, through doing, and through slow layers of insight. The tide carries much more than water. Our cover image, taken at Smails Beach in the far south of Aotearoa New Zealand, catches that play of sun on tide and breakers, where flowers lean forward into salt air. As a whole, the contributions to this issue present identity as something we bring, offer, and let grow, together, in motion.

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