

Making a difference and self-efficacy: Interviews with Jude Carroll, Kate Chanock and Marcia Devlin

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This paper is based on the assumption that we as Language and Academic Skills advisers aim to make a difference to student learning. Many of us do this work with individual students and so develop insights into what facilitates or hampers student learning. With these insights we could be involved in developing learning opportunities for many students. In this paper I consider that developing personal agency is one way that LAS advisers could increase opportunities to positively influence the teaching and learning at our universities. In order to learn more about the attitudes of those whose work has been influential in developing the learning environment both within their own universities and also the academy as a whole, I interviewed Jude Carroll, Kate Chanock and Marcia Devlin. During the interviews these women reflected on who has influenced them, their mistakes and their achievements. The interviews were analysed using Bandura's theory (1986) that self-beliefs and in particular self-efficacy can explain achievement behaviour. In most cases the women demonstrated attributes of self-efficacy. They provide models of vicarious learning for LAS advisers who need to be resilient if they want to make a difference to university teaching and learning.

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