

Laudatio for John Hattie

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear guests and colleagues,

It is with great pleasure and deep respect that I present this laudatio for Professor John Hattie, Laureate Professor at the University of Melbourne, Australia, chair of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, a visionary educator, researcher, and leader, the recipient of the Gutenberg Teaching Award 2023.

Professor John Hattie is renowned for his groundbreaking work in educational research, particularly his synthesis of – at the time – over 1,500 meta-analyses to identify factors that have visible impact on student achievement. His seminal work, "Visible Learning," has stimulated discussions among researchers, teacher educators, practitioners, and policy makers in education, worldwide.

The compilation of research on visible learning has been a major contribution to the field of education, and, as such, would alone have served as a capstone project of an accomplished career. However, not for John Hattie. His research has exceeded way beyond the pages of academic journals. He has published books together with other experts to illustrate the practical implications of his research, e.g., Visible Learning Feedback, and Developing Assessment Capable Visible Learners. In addition, he has frequently collaborated with schools, educational organizations, teachers, and policymakers to implement evidence-based practices for visible learning.

One of the outcomes of Professor Hattie's work has inspired the community of teachers and learners particularly strongly, and that is the emphasis on the importance of feedback. He has demonstrated that timely, specific, and actionable feedback is one of the most powerful influences on student learning. This insight has stimulated the reflection on classroom practices around the globe, prompting educators to revise and refine their teaching methods to better support their students along the lines of how am I doing, how did I get there, and where to next?

His most recent publication, Visible Learning 2.0, is a sequel to visible learning which is now based on over 2600 meta-analyses and which brings forward the four BIG ideas underlying visible learning. We will hear more about them in a moment.

In sum, John Hattie's work has made a difference in the lives of students and teachers. His work resonates with educators because it is rooted in a genuine desire to understand and improve the learning experience for every student.

Today, as we honor Professor John Hattie, we celebrate not only his remarkable achievements but also the spirit of curiosity, dedication, and hope that he embodies. His work reminds us that education is not a static field but a dynamic and evolving journey. It challenges us to continually seek out the best methods, to question our assumptions, and to strive for excellence in all that we do.

Professor Hattie, on behalf of educators, students, and learning communities, we thank you for your extraordinary contributions to the field of education. It is an honor for us that you accept the Gutenberg Teaching Award. I would like to add that John Hattie has requested to place the prize money into the Hattie Family Foundation that is used to supplement theses students. So, both your academic work and your personal commitment to learners have inspired us to review and to reflect on our path to better learning and teaching, and for that, we are profoundly grateful.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please join me in honoring Professor John Hattie.

Prof. Dr. Margarete Imhof, 12. November 2024