

Part I

Professions and Professional Practice

This first part comprises contributions that advance accounts of what constitutes the professions, professional practice and how the practice of professions is enacted in workplaces. In doing so, they set out and elaborate the objects of what efforts associated with learning for the professions and through practice-based considerations are directed. In his chapter – *Professionalism, profession and professional conduct: Towards a basic logic and ethical geography* (Chap. 1) – David Carr explores the current broadly based interest in professions and professionalism. Both the attraction of high status occupations and characteristics of occupations performed to the highest standard, including ethical conduct have broadly attracted much interest. Yet, such premises require clear understandings about and distinctions amongst what constitutes a profession, being professional and the broader conservation of professionalism. He proposes that whilst many occupations have and are characterised by the need for moral conduct, that professions are distinguishable by inherent ethical nature and the status of their enactment. These distinguishing qualities then become central concern for professional education, with the object of securing a professional phronesis. Adopting a sociological stance Julia Evetts in her chapter – *The concept of professionalism: Professional work, professional practice and learning* (Chap. 2) – elaborates changing conceptions of professionalism from those largely associated with the organisation of work practice as undertaken and exercised by an individual professional, through to a form of work which is increasingly subject to the constraints and expectations of large organisations, where professionals increasingly work. To delineate this trajectory, she examines how the conception of professionalism arose and has been transformed in contemporary times. In particular, she refers to how the practice of the professions within organisations whilst being increasingly common, positions professionalism and professionals discretion in decision-making within an organisational context, which could have either private or public sector goals. Adopting a similar theme, Gerhard Minnameier proposes that the sets of standards which are used to guide the preparation of professionals needs to both include the moral aspects of professional practice, and how those aspects and professional practice more broadly are shaped by situational clues and

what constitutes situationally appropriate professional practice. In his aptly entitled contribution – *Moral aspects of professions and professional practice* (Chap. 3) – he argues for the use of a broader set of standards as guidelines for developing professional practice and that these guidelines need to address both moral and situational adjustments to more broadly encompass that practice.

In their chapter – *Professional work and knowledge* (Chap. 4) – Peter Goodyear and Lina Markauskaite explore perspectives of relations between professional work and the knowledge which supports it. Their review is informed by emerging theories that make specific references to both contributions from working and learning in work settings which are captured through the conception of an extended mind. This consideration is augmented by accounts and conceptions that emphasise the active nature of perception as possessed and deployed by human actors. They suggest that the reliance upon explicit and conceptual knowledge as emphasised within the educational discourse needs to be moderated by one which is more broadly inclusive of a wider range of ways of knowing, acting and the circumstances in which these can be more effectively enacted. For instance, the emphasis on experiences within work settings and how these might be related to those within educational institutions is a central consideration. In his chapter – *Conceptions of professional competence* (Chap. 5) – Martin Mulder proposes that conceptions of professional competence have been helpful in understanding the requirements for learning these occupations and through practice-based experiences. His emphases in making such claims is that through coming to understand what constitutes professional competence and that what constitutes professional competence has a range of dimensions and characteristics which then can lead to informed views about how such competence can be developed initially and extended across professionals' working life. In advancing the case he links competence to considerations of motivation, intelligence as well as performance. From these, a number of specific and non-domain specific elements of competence are proposed as needing to be developed. He then proposes schemes by which professional competence can be generated and evaluated, and provides examples of how this has been enacted across a range of occupations.

Adopting a sociological perspective, Silvia Gherardi and Manuela Perrotta in their chapter – *Becoming a practitioner: Professional learning as a social practice* (Chap. 6) – discuss another kind of trajectory. That is, of individuals becoming socialised as professional practitioners, through their participation in professional practice, and socialisation into the particular profession. They identify a dual process of individuals being inducted into a particular circumstance of practice and at the same time being seduced into the particular profession. Hence, they give much attention to the issue of being inducted into professional practice and professional work. Basing their analyses on professionals' engagement in fertility clinics, they propose processes of becoming a professional is not concluded when commencing as a professional, but continues across working life as does the tensions in negotiations of contradictions amongst the management of professional work, its conduct and professionals' identity as workers. Finally, in the chapter entitled – *Productive systems of professional formation* (Chap. 7) – Jim Hordern examines ways that pathways towards and processes of professional formation recognition are shaped

by the relations amongst professional associations, educational institutions and employing organisations. These relations give rise to not only to what constitutes professional knowledge, but also the organisation of professional work. Adopting a sociological perspective of knowledge and identity formation, and drawing findings from distinct kinds of professional practice, this chapter illuminates how these processes are enacted and appropriated by those engaged in professional work.

Across this opening part, then, these contributions explicitly address what constitutes professions and professional practice, including the ethical dimensions of occupational practice. Considerations are also given here to the formation of professions and the way professional associations and professionals serve and sustain the standing of the professions. In doing so, these contributions set out something of the concepts, thematic issues and premises for considering what constitutes the professions and their formation that are the central focus of this Handbook.