



CAMBRIDGE ASSESSMENT

The judgement processes involved in the moderation of teacher-assessed projects in a national assessment

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Abstract

Classroom-based assessments have the potential to enhance validity by facilitating the assessment of important skills that are difficult to assess in written examinations. Such assessments are often marked by teachers. To ensure consistent marking standards, quality assurance procedures are needed.

In the context of continued debate over the validity and robustness of assessment by teachers, this research was conducted to investigate the cognitive and social processes involved in the moderation of project work in General Certificate of Secondary Education qualifications (taken by many 16 year olds in England). The research involved nine examiners across three subject areas 'thinking aloud' whilst moderating the marks given to six students. They were also interviewed about various aspects of their judgement processes.

The research aimed to explore moderation judgements and whether these can be understood in relation to existing theories of judgement in assessment and other contexts. Improving our understanding of the judgement processes involved when an examiner moderates teacher marking can help to evaluate the appropriateness of this assessment method, may contribute to debate on whether teacher marking can be sufficiently well verified by quality assurance procedures, and may inform moderation practice.